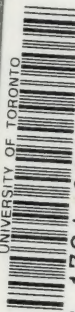


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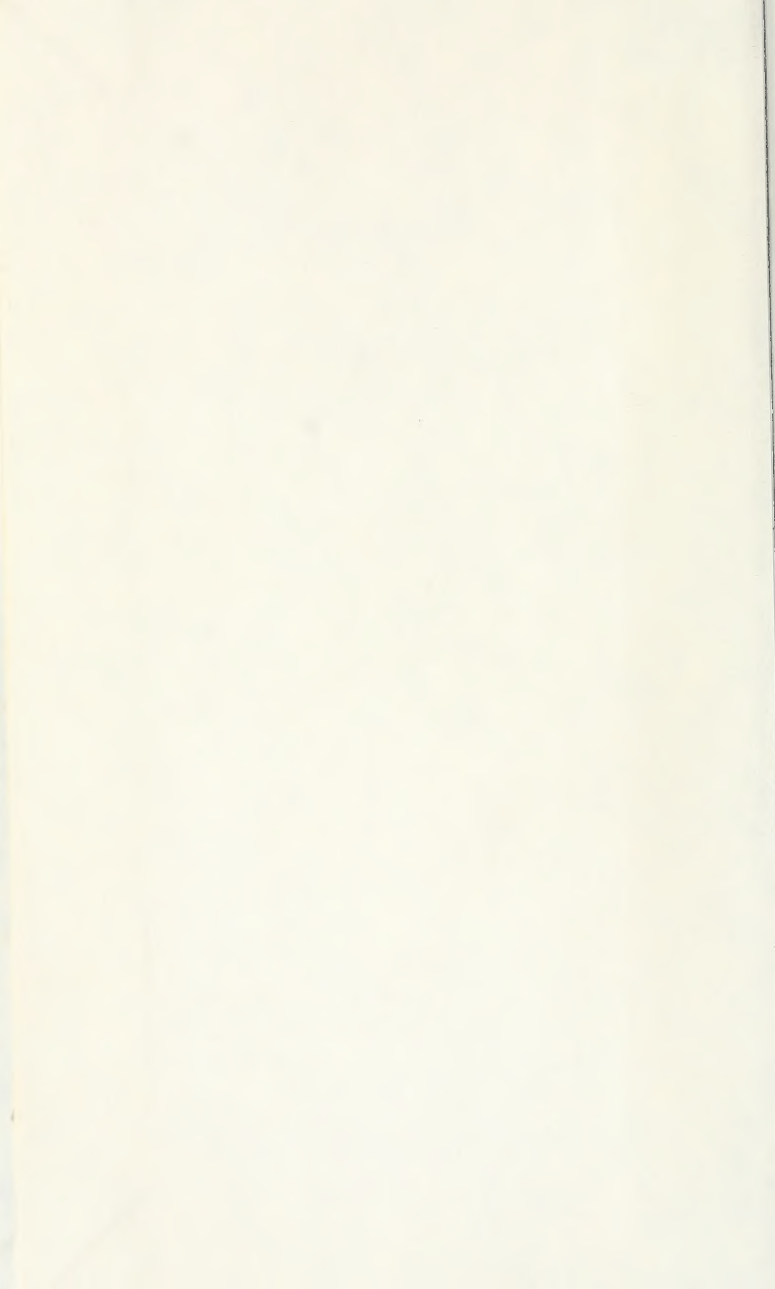


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SOME ASPECTS OF  
THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT



# Some Aspects of The Woman's Movement

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## PREFACE.

THIS book has been prepared under considerable difficulties, and I desire, on behalf of the Student Christian Movement, to thank the contributors both for their willingness to help and for their patience with the demands made upon them. I should like to add my personal thanks to other friends for sympathy and advice, and to Mr. Hugh Martin, who has kindly helped to see the book through the press.

Z. B. F.



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# SOME ASPECTS OF THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

**T**HIS book was first thought of in 1913, and was planned to meet the growing interest in the Woman's Movement, which was then manifest in the colleges—not only in the women's, but in the men's, including theological colleges.

Men and women have always worked side by side in the Student Christian Movement, and because of the experience thus gained it was possible to approach the question without the prejudice and bitterness found in so many quarters. The Executive readily agreed to issue a book on the subject of the Woman's Movement for the use of study circles in the colleges or elsewhere, or for general reading. They were fully aware of the vast quantity of literature which was being produced on all sides, but there still seemed room for a small book which should attempt to deal with the subject as a whole, and which should do

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so from the religious point of view. The question is one which has gained steadily in importance in the life of the Church at home and abroad.

The choice had to be made between a book by one author and a book by several. A composite book was decided upon, because adequate knowledge of the matters dealt with was thought to be even more important than coherence ; but it will be seen that the ideas which run through the book do, as a matter of fact, make it a coherent whole, in spite of varieties of style and approach. The book was to have been published in the autumn of 1914, but on the outbreak of war publication was temporarily postponed. During the past year many theories have been tested by stern realities : the place of woman in the life of the nation and in public service has been more firmly established : the consideration of her point of view in politics, and particularly in international politics, has entered upon a new phase : much bitterness has been allayed : a new opportunity for unprejudiced consideration of her strength and her weakness has come about.

At the same time a considerable amount of ethical unrest and of moral uncertainty has been revealed, and the need for the fuller understanding and teaching of positive and compelling moral ideals is clear.

This book is an attempt to estimate the actual

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position of women in the past and in the present, and to suggest some of the guiding principles upon which the future may most hopefully be built. It is intended as a basis for study, and does not offer solutions of questions which are still awaiting such solution.

The first chapter by Mr. Barker is a survey of the place of women in history, showing what their position has been in fact, and indicating the causes which have chiefly affected that position. While, as Mr. Barker says, the present and future must be decided by ethical principle and not by historical precedent—unless indeed we are to endorse the saying that nothing ought ever to happen that has not happened before—yet a knowledge of the past out of which the future must grow and in which its roots are deeply sunk is essential. Miss Ady's chapter is also historical, but seeks to show how women have influenced history rather than how the events and ideas, which have gone to make history, have affected women.

The three chapters which follow, two by Miss Collet and one by Dr. Helen Wilson, deal with the life and work of women, and the history of the Woman's Movement, during recent times in this country. Miss Collet writes of normal developments in education and in the economic sphere, and Dr. Wilson deals with the movement for moral reform in face of evils.

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In the Woman's Movement, as most people think of it, these three lines of development—intellectual, economic, and moral—are so closely intertwined that it is hard to think of them apart, but the failure to distinguish between them is the cause of endless confusion of thought. While the movement for education has always been a voluntary movement, economic change and emancipation have been almost entirely an unconscious process: the transition from the domestic to the factory system was in no sense deliberate. The gradual awakening of public opinion as to the conditions of women's labour, and the education of the women themselves, have combined to make the movement to-day a conscious one. The Woman's Movement of to-day is the coming together of much that is deliberate with much more that is instinctive—the coming to birth of a new conception of womanhood in the minds both of men and of women. No one can understand the force which lies behind the Movement until they realize its other aspect—the passionate protest against the evils of which Dr. Wilson writes. It is nevertheless important to remember that the Movement is quite as much a part of the general march and progress of human history, as a revolt against injustice, oppression, and crime.

The sixth chapter, by Miss Saunders, takes up the international aspects of the Woman's



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Movement, especially as seen in movements of a definitely religious character. This should be supplemented by the study of its manifestations in the international suffrage movement and in international socialism.

Lying behind the question of the place of women in international relationships, which has become of vital importance, is the question of the place of women in the State. This Mr. Temple takes up in the following chapter on the "Nature of Government."

The concluding chapters deal with some of the questions concerning the relations of men and women, and the family, which have been so much discussed in connection with the Woman's Movement. It is contended that the fundamental idea in the Woman's Movement is one with the fundamental idea of the Christian ethical system, and that the ethical unrest and questioning of to-day demands the fuller understanding and application of this fundamental idea.

Facts about the actual position of women in various ecclesiastical systems are given in the Appendix. This important subject is treated in this way because it seemed that the position of women in the Church was a question which was still waiting to be thought out, and that the most useful contribution was to give some of the facts and to leave to the reader the task of relating

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them to principles and of discovering the path of truth and progress.

This and the other problems discussed in the book emphasize the demand upon our generation for a courageous faith in the continued guidance of the Spirit, who is the Lord and Giver of life and light.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *HISTORY AND THE POSITION OF WOMEN.*

ERNEST BARKER.

**H**ISTORY is a record of things that have been. Sometimes these things are proved by the record to have been so bad, that no man who reads can wish them to last longer; and sometimes, again, they are shown to have been so rich in promise and potentiality that to read of them is to love them and to long for their perpetuation. But history remains a record of things that have been. It cannot sit in the chair of counsel, or determine the things which should be. Men are often tempted to ransack the lumber-rooms of the past in the hope of finding the keys which will unlock the future. Socialists seek to find socialism in the early village community, and feminists sometimes search for a charter of the rights of women in communities of a still earlier growth. Even if they find what they seek (and the records of early days are not always very decipherable), they have not found any key

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to our modern riddles. If there was such a thing as primitive socialism, and if it was good in its day and environment, it does not follow that a system of socialism is right in our day and under our different conditions. And in the same way, even if a primitive matriarchal society can be proved to have existed, its existence entails no morals and involves no consequences for a modern society. The proper status of women in modern societies must be discussed and settled in the light not of history, but of ethics. It must accord not with any particular phase of the past, but with the general moral ideal which is current at the present time. The treatment of women must square with the general conception of conduct and behaviour which each society seeks to realize on the other sides of its life. A society, for instance, which is organized on a democratic conception is a society based on respect for the fundamental fact of human personality. Its institutions have their foundation in that respect. They are adjusted to the necessity of providing the freest possible scope for the greatest number of persons. If they fail to provide free scope for one-half of their members, it follows, either that those members are not persons, which is absurd, or that they are not being treated as persons, which—granted the moral premiss on which such a society proceeds—is wrong. One can criticize a society for being

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inconsistent with itself. What one cannot do is to criticize it for being different from the past. It would not be living if it were not different. Life means growth, and growth means change.

History, then, will not dispense us from the task of thought. It will not release us from the necessity of discovering by thought the ethical ideals implicit in our social life, or from the effort of testing the conformity of each institution with those ideals. In every age we have to make the appropriate social vesture. We cannot find ready-made clothes in the past. If we think we do so, we deceive ourselves. We have really taken our modern tape-measures and patterns with us into the past and cut it out accordingly. But to cut the past into fancy dress in order to clothe the present is a thing of little service. Going back, for instance, to the Middle Ages, and finding that women who were holders of fiefs could—and on occasion did—sit side by side with male holders of fiefs in baronial assemblies, we may argue that if the Middle Ages went as far as that, we might well go as far as they did. Such an argument implies that those ages had thought of the question of sex, and had settled it in a particular way. But they had not thought of the question at all. When they thought of baronial assemblies, they did not think in terms of sexes, or even of persons: they thought in terms of tenements. They felt that every great tenement

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or barony ought to be represented in a baronial assembly by its holder or its holder's authorized proctor. The land had, as it were, a right to come, and if it came through a woman, that fact constituted no new principle, and afforded no argument for the representation of women as persons. The mediæval baron knew nothing of women's rights, but he knew a great deal of the rights of fiefs. We must be careful not to distort his point of view.\*

The influences which have gone to determine the position of women in history have been very various. Economic conditions, legal ideas, and religious conceptions have all been active. Economic conditions have now exalted, and now depressed, the status of women. In early hunting societies, when fathers roamed abroad in search of game, and mothers stayed at home in caves with their children, the woman would be the

\* In the same way a mediæval Churchman would have defended the rights of religious orders and of abbesses as heads of religious bodies. But he would have been defending the order, not the person; and his defence would have been compatible with curious views about the position which women should hold as women. St. Bernard, for instance, is said to have once been rapt in prayer to an image of the Virgin in a cathedral. As he prayed, the image spoke in answer to his prayer. "Silence," said the astonished Saint; "no woman is to speak in the congregation."



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centre of the home; the children would be her children, called by her name; and one may even imagine that in this stage of economic progress, unable to share the vagrant life of the men, and tied to one spot by the care of children, she relieved the monotony of her condition by inventing civilization in order to pass the time—domesticating animals, cultivating plants, and excogitating tools. In the same way one may believe that the passage from hunting to pastoral pursuits depressed the condition of woman. After all, she had invented civilization to her own undoing. The cattle she had domesticated thrived in number, and the men were content to live idly on their produce. In time they conceived the notion of permanent property in their flocks and herds. They set their women to be keepers of cattle; they made them their “property” as much—or almost as much—as the cattle they kept; and the patriarchal family, in which the father had absolute ownership of all things, and absolute power over all persons, came into existence. The operation of these economic influences is most direct and obvious in the early days of our race; but it is equally present, if more indirect and more intermixed with the operation of other influences, in modern times. The Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century, which drew women, and even children, into the wheels of its machinery, involved

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large questions of the position of women and the proper life of the family. Its immediate effect was the degradation of women workers: its ultimate effect was the attempt of the State, through Factory Acts and other legislation, to assume new functions which the prevalent doctrine of *laissez-faire* had never contemplated, and to become the protector and patron of workers who could not protect themselves. In our own century it is still economic factors which raise the thorniest problems. In England and Wales the number of women exceeds the number of men by over a million. Whatever its causes, the fact has a grave significance of its own. It means that there are tens of thousands of women who must somehow find a place in the competitive system of modern industry. The State, which was driven by the problem of women and child workers to alter its conception of its functions and to extend the area of its action, may find itself forced, by economic factors equally urgent, to alter its conception of membership and to extend the area of its citizenship.

But it is a corruption of history to exaggerate the economic factor at the expense of other and more spiritual factors. Societies do not live by bread alone; and the influence of religion and law are at the very least no less potent than that of

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economic conditions. Societies which found in the worship of male ancestors the religious consecration of their daily life could hardly attain to any high conception of the dignity of womanhood. Worships and faiths of a higher quality have not altogether escaped from the assignation of a large predominance to the masculine side of life. Asia is the mother of religions; and the cults which have developed on Oriental soil have often retained curious traces of their origin. The seclusion of women, which marks the East—the limitation to men of the open and public life of the streets and markets—these are features which have inevitably mirrored themselves in religious ideas, and even more in the organization of religious worship. The spread of Mohammedanism from Arabia along Northern Africa, and into Eastern Europe, has carried broadcast an Oriental conception and treatment of women. It is one of the glories of Latin Christianity that its reverence of the Virgin-Mother, and its cult of women saints, have contributed to redress the balance which tends so readily to be tilted the other way.

The influence of law on social life is large and penetrating. We may be tempted to think that social relations comes first, and that law comes afterwards to define and enunciate in regular form the relations which it already finds in existence.

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But there is also a reverse process, which has its own importance and influence. The formulation of a legal conception may create as well as register. No doubt men had a feeling of property before there was any law of property. But as soon as a law of property arose to register and define this feeling, the law at once became a formative influence, which served in its measure to regulate and control the future development of property. The legal conceptions of the relation between the sexes have in the same way helped to determine the position of women through history. The law of marriage, the law of divorce, the law of succession (according as it recognizes or fails to recognize the rights of daughters as well as the rights of sons)—all these, and other laws besides these, have gone to determine the position of women in social life. Early Roman law, for instance, was adjusted to the central notion of *patria potestas*, and calculated to realize with a thorough logic the full consequences of the conception of the absolute power of the father over his family. A woman, whether wife, or mother, or daughter, could have no legal "person" of her own. She was always under the control of father or husband or guardian; for she must necessarily be adjusted, and she could only be adjusted by way of subordination, to the central and determining fact of masculine power. So far, indeed, did her sub-

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ordination go that, according to the early law of succession, she could not even transmit the blood of her family. Descent was counted through males, and through males only; and, therefore, if a woman were the only surviving member of a family, the family was already extinct in her person—for “a woman is the end of a family.” Perhaps no other system of law has had so definitely masculine a bias as that of early Rome; but in the feudal law of mediæval Europe there are features, such as the law of primogeniture, and still more perhaps the law permitting entail on heirs male of the body of the original grantee, which show the same trend.

1. The position of women in ancient Greece varied from state to state. The Spartan mother lived a more vigorous life than the Athenian. But everywhere the part of women in the life of the old Greek world was inconsiderable. When the Greeks thought of love, they thought in the first place of a love “passing the love of women”—the love of man for man, of David for Jonathan. The public life of their streets and places of assembly was a masculine life. Men met men in the market-place and assembly and gymnasia; “the Greek city was for most purposes a men’s

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club." The women sat in their women's quarter at home and spun and bore children. They were married early, about the age of fifteen ; and when they married they passed from the seclusion of the women's quarter in one house to the seclusion of that in another. They saw few men besides their husbands ; the social gatherings of the Greeks were as masculine as the rest of their life. In Sparta, indeed, the position of women was peculiar, as many things were in Sparta. The young girls practised gymnastics like the young men ; they had their wrestlings and their races, at which the rest of the Greek world marvelled. But this seeming emancipation was only in reality a more drastic form of subjugation. The Spartans, a martial race, desired healthy mothers of healthy warriors ; and they regarded their womenfolk with the eyes of breeders. Men would exchange their wives, if the exchange seemed likely to produce a larger and more vigorous progeny for the state ; and even if a husband clove to one wife, husband and wife never lived together in any intimacy of marriage. The husband belonged to the barracks, and only saw his wife at rare intervals. The state, which separated husband and wife, separated also mother and children. At the age of seven children passed from the life of the home into the training school of the state. One reads of the stern stoicism with which Spartan mothers



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sacrificed their sons in war. But the fact is that every Spartan mother had already sacrificed her boy to the state in peace.

The example of Sparta may suggest that respect for women is not one of the virtues of the military state. War may breed chivalry, and chivalry may embrace a gentle courtesy to ladies ; but these were not the fruits that flourished in the Prussia of the ancient world. Sparta made everything, and not least her women, subject to the iron rigours of military exigency. The Greek philosopher on whom the zeal of the state descended most fervently would fain have seen the model of Sparta followed in his ideal Republic. To Plato there seemed to be no difference between men and women except in strength ; and in order to devote both alike to the service of the state, in peace and in war, he contemplated an extension of the Spartan plan to the extremes of logical consequence. Marriage should disappear ; temporary unions of the sexes should take its place ; and in the intervals of child-bearing women should live in barracks and practise the art of war equally with men. Plato was an Athenian ; but in these things, as in many others, he thought like a Spartan rather than an Athenian. It is true that even to an Athenian marriage seemed a means, and woman an instrument, for the procreation of citizens for the service of the state. Pericles

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in the great funeral speech over the Athenians who had died in war, can bid the mourning parents to "keep a brave heart in the hope of other children—those who are still of age to bear them; for the newcomers will help you to forget the gap in your own circle, and will help the city to fill up the ranks of its workers and soldiers." At Athens, too, as indeed everywhere in the Greek world except at Sparta, the women were condemned to something of an Oriental seclusion, and taught to think that they should be neither seen nor heard. The greatest glory which Pericles can assign to women is "hers . . . whose praise or blame is least bruited on the lips of men." But at Athens there was also a certain liberty, at any rate on the ground of religion. In the worship of Demeter—the goddess of mother earth, the giver of corn—there was a "people" of the women as well as a "people" of the men of Athens. Such recognition—apparently a survival of the men's side and the women's side of archaic worships—would perhaps mean little. The real freedom of women at Athens took a sadder form. While lawful Athenian wives sat at home, only emerging for religious exercises, there was a considerable population of resident aliens who followed the profession of "companions." Aspasia, the "companion" of Pericles, is famous in history; but there were many others of her class, of many

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grades, who added to physical beauty gifts of wit or musical skill or dancing, and mingled with the men in social gatherings as lawful wives were never permitted to do. "We have companions for the sake of pleasure," says the Athenian orator, "and wives to bear lawful offspring and be faithful guardians of our homes."

The problem of the proper position of women was one which engaged Athenian thought in the days that succeeded the Periclean age. Radical thought, which found slavery "conventional" and "contrary to nature," was also beginning to undermine the accepted code which regulated relations between the sexes. The testimony of Euripides, in one of his greatest and most famous plays, suggests that women were fretting and restive under the ideals of feminine modesty and decorum which men sought to impose. "Of all things that are endowed with life and thought," Euripides makes Medea complain, "we women are most wretched." The grounds she gives are made of the stuff of permanent and elemental humanity. "A man, when he is irked by his company at home, goes abroad and eases his heart of vexation by betaking himself to his friends or companions; but we have to keep our minds fixed on a single being. They say we live our life secure at home, while they are fighting with the spear—but I would rather take my stand thrice in the line

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of battle, where shield is touching shield, than go through the pangs of childbirth a single time." Some old arguments are very new, and some modern grievances are very ancient.

The plaint of Medea was one that many an Athenian woman must have echoed. She had "to keep her eyes fixed on a single being," while the "companions" went from banquet to banquet, and saw the world and its fashions. *She* stood outside the intimate arcana of Athenian society; *they* entered all its mysteries. True, she had economic security, while they were subject to the vicissitudes of their profession and the vagaries of masculine taste. But the economic security of the Athenian wife had its limits. She had no claim on her husband's property under Athenian law; she could not even reside in her husband's house after his death, unless she was able to plead pregnancy. Her only security against falling into indigence on her husband's death was a dowry from her father. Even in her husband's lifetime there was one security she could never enjoy. She could never be sure that the children she bore would be allowed to live. The father had the right of deciding whether he would "nourish" or "expose" his children. Exposure of children, either among the windy sheep-walks on the hills, or in a jar in some corner of the city, was a common practice among the Greeks; and exposure of

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female children was particularly common. There would be few who had the good fortune to be found in the rushes and adopted by a princess.

2. Of the position of women in early Roman law something has already been said. But it would be unfair to the genius of Roman life not to recognize that marriage was to the Roman in the early days of his history something of the nature of a permanent sacrament. The wife entered the intimate worship of the family, and marriage is defined by the Roman lawyers as an intercommunion of sacred and human law. But if originally the lawful wife, in coming into "the hand" and under the "power" of her husband, was joined to him by a sacramental bond, the original rule soon came to be altered. From an early time it was possible to be a wife by "just nuptials," and yet to be free from the legal power of the husband. Gradually the marriage bond became looser, and the idea of contract superseded the idea of sacrament. At last the form of marriage which left the wife free from marital power obtained a general vogue; and soon after the beginning of the Christian era the Roman wife was in every case an independent matron. The very word matron (which properly means a wife free from the "hand" of her husband), with all its suggestions of the grave mother ruling her household in dignity, bears

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testimony to the position which the Roman wife held by the side of her husband. " She had for all purposes a legal personal existence independently of her husband, and consequently her property was distinct from his ; between husband and wife there was no community of property in Roman law "—as there was for centuries in English law.

Legally independent, the Roman wife naturally enjoyed a generous measure of social freedom. The semi-Oriental seclusion of Athens was unknown at Rome. Here the wife could attend banquets, watch the public spectacles, and go everywhere to see and be seen. The married woman of position and beauty was the cynosure of all eyes. She ruled a great house with its hundreds of slaves ; she was used to receiving homage and dispensing favours. The free individuality of the woman expanded readily at Rome : her wit could flash, and her courage shine, as brightly as any man's ; sometimes, indeed, she seems to dominate the tone and fashion of Roman society. Under the Empire, with a court established at Rome, these things were natural enough ; court-life and court-ceremony are always favourable to the social prestige of women. But even under the Republic grave mothers made themselves great names ; and all through Roman history, from first to last, women were never supernumeraries on the stage. How many names of women

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glow in Roman history and legend—Lucretia, Virginia, Cornelia, Portia, Arria—and how few are those which shine in the history of Greece !

The freedom of Roman wives had its darker side. Marriages were generally *mariages de convenance* ; and the wife did not always count herself bound to love or honour her husband. The Rome of Ovid's amatory poems and Juvenal's satires was hardly pure. Divorce was easy. Since the bond of marriage was now held to consist simply in the joint consent of the parties, it followed that if either husband or wife withdrew that consent by an act of repudiation, the marriage was null and void. Marriage was not a sacrament, or even a binding civil contract enforced by the state ; it was a mere *consensus* which could be dissolved as easily as it was formed, without any judicial decree or act of public authority. A man might dismiss his wife, and bid her " take her things away," almost as readily as a master can dismiss a servant to-day. The only limitations on this freedom, before the days of Christianity, were the necessity of giving formal notice before witnesses, and of having some ground of excuse. Penalties were indeed imposed on such as divorced without cause ; but custom allowed a good deal of latitude in the assignation of causes. Divorces, as a matter of fact, were frequent, and remarriage was common. Sulla and Pompey were both



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married five times ; Cæsar and Antony had both four wives in succession. An easy morality was the natural concomitant of this facility of divorce. The institution of slavery only aided the general laxity. Misconduct with slaves was common to both sexes, and was hardly even viewed as misconduct.

3. It is perhaps easy to exaggerate the immorality of paganism. Our evidence is necessarily drawn in large measure from the satirist, who exaggerates the flaws he castigates in order to castigate them the more readily. It is drawn, again, from pictures of the life of the capital ; and the provinces, if simpler in wits, are generally also simpler in morals than capitals. But there can be little doubt that the women of pagan Rome had bought liberty and equality at a great price. They were free to attend circus and pantomime ; they were able to sit as equals by the side of the men in social gatherings ; but marriage had become a loose contract, and the intimacy and sanctity of the family were vanished ideals. Of all the things done by Christianity, its elevation of the ideal of marriage was one of the greatest. In the teaching of our Lord, marriage is no loose contract of two independent parties, but a sacramental bond which man cannot put asunder. As soon as the Christian Church became a recog-



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nized power in the Roman Empire, it championed the Christian idea of marriage against the principles of Roman law. Against the concubinage permitted by Roman law, against contractual marriage, against facility of divorce, it waged an unremitting crusade. Under its influence Constantine sought to restrict concubinage; his successors sought to limit the grounds of divorce; and Justinian sought in various ways to bring Roman law closer to the Christian idea. He limited still further the grounds of divorce, and attempted as far as possible to imitate the Church in making conjugal infidelity the only permissible cause; he sought to make the mother capable of guardianship over her children, and to improve the laws of succession in the interest of sisters and daughters. In other ways, too, Christian influence wrought a revolution in the family life of the ancient world. "The ideal of conjugal fidelity; the need of a careful education of children in morals and religion; the condemnation of any limitation of offspring by exposure or by abortion—these were not only rules which were strictly enforced by the Christian community on its own members, but principles which became, as soon as the state adopted the Christian religion, the universal basis of society at large, partly through ecclesiastical influence in the shape of ecclesiastical law and penance and discipline, and

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partly through modifications of the law of the secular state."

Much as Christianity did to improve the position of women, its influence was also cast to some extent in the other scale. Priestesses were common in the heathen cults ; and in the worship of early Christianity women still played a part. We read of the office of the widows, who were, it is said, " a sort of feminine priests," taking their share in ecclesiastical services and religious instruction as well as in poor relief. But with the growth of the office of priest women disappear from the government of the Church ; and their activity was confined to the office of deaconess, which eventually assumed a menial character, and to the life of the nunnery. A woman could never celebrate the Mass : " the weak," so runs an apocryphal saying of our Lord, " is saved by the strong." Women thus lost any active part in the public cult of Christianity ; and the ascetic and monastic tendency which developed in the Church during the fourth and fifth centuries was still more fatal to the dignity of women. The ascetic element is already present in the attitude of St. Paul to marriage ; and as more and more men were driven, partly by the pressure of economic conditions, and partly by the ardour of religious enthusiasm, to embrace the solitary life of the monk, the general opinion of the Christian Church began to

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tend towards an exaggerated view of the value of chastity. The more men came to value chastity, the more they came to depreciate, however illogically, the value of that society of womenfolk from which they had cut themselves adrift.

The conception of woman as an inferior being, and as something in the nature of a temptation to be avoided, was a conception which was only monkish, and never genuinely Christian. And however much the monk might be tempted to identify virginity with Christianity itself, there were always other influences at work. Though the monk, following his counsels of perfection, might eschew the society of women, and affect to despise what he eschewed, the Church as a whole never ceased to believe in the value and dignity of marriage as an institution of lay society. It consecrated marriage as a sacrament; and its elevation of the dignity of marriage was also an elevation of the dignity of woman. Again the central Christian tenet, if so it may be called, of the worth of every human soul before God was a tenet which gave a new worth to womanhood. In Christianity there is neither Greek nor barbarian, neither bond nor free, neither man nor woman; for all are alike and equally recipients of grace and dwelling-places of the Most High. The conception of personality, and of the rights of personality, was a conception which flourished

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on Christian soil ; and whatever the aberrations of asceticism, the genuine core of the doctrine of the Church gave woman a new status in the world, which she had not possessed in the city-State of the Greeks, dominated as it was by a masculine genius, or even in the society of Rome, controlled as it was in its early days by the tyranny of male power, and corrupted as it was in later days by the degradation of marriage to contract, the ease of divorce, and the prevalence of concubinage. Finally the very vogue of monasticism served in one way to give a new prestige to woman, if in other ways it exercised the opposite effect. Women could embrace the monastic life as much as men ; and the nun might attain the perfect way as well as the monk. The highest citizenship of the City of God—as the life of monasticism was thought to be for many centuries—was a citizenship which knew no distinction of sex.

4. The entry of the barbarians into the Mediterranean world—an entry definitely achieved in the fifth century of our era—brought the last element which goes to the making of our modern world. The Roman historian Tacitus already notes the high respect paid by the Teutonic tribes to their women. A wavering line of battle was often restored by their exhortations ; for they accompanied the men to war, and watched the

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fray from the laager of waggons. The Germans believed that there was something holy and prophetic in women, and they listened to the sayings and heeded the counsels of their prophetesses. Alone among the barbarians known to the Romans, they were monogamous, and the chastity of their married lives was the marvel of decadent Rome. The wife was the yoke-fellow and help-meet of her husband, and in the ceremony of marriage she was warned that she came to share his labours and perils, and to bear and dare all that he bore and dared alike in peace and war.

In these things we may perhaps see in advance the germs of the practice of chivalry, which marks the middle of the Middle Ages. Chivalry, indeed, was always more of a theory than a practice. It was the convention of a polite society, and, what is more, it was in large measure a literary convention. It did not represent the manners and breeding of actual society so much as the airs and graces of the imaginary world of the novelist. But the ideals of an age are part of the age, and however liberal a discount we may allow in seeking to strike the real balance, the residuum will hardly be zero. The society in which the ideals of chivalry flourished was a society in which the influence of women was strong. The ages of restless turbulence were dying down, and a new phase of European life was beginning, which is definitely marked by

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the end of the eleventh century. The Church was rising to a new glory and to a control of European life on a grand scale. By the Truce of God it was taming the wild instincts of a war-loving nobility ; by the Crusades it was gathering knights together to fight in common for ideal ends ; and in both ways, it was promoting that consecration of strength to the defence of weakness which the world calls chivalry. Meanwhile the development of trade and the growth of luxury, which a more settled society made possible, were introducing a softer and more civilized life, in which women, banished during the masculine rigours of the ages of turbulence, could once more find a place. The castle, which had been the home of a fierce soldiery, began to be a centre of social life, where troubadour and trouvère might be heard ; where ladies mixed freely with knights ; where silks and vairs might be seen, and the carpets and tapestries of the East were not unknown. The brutal tussle of feud and foray was softened into the tournament, in which ladies' eyes might rain influence and adjudge the prize ; and in Languedoc, Aquitaine and Champagne a new system of the relations of the sexes could, at any rate in theory, be evolved.

In this new system the central fact was the almost mystic devotion of the knight to his lady. The idea of personal loyalty—of uttermost devotion

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freely paid by one human being to another—is an idea which the Germans had early embraced. One hears in the first ages of their history of the devotion rendered by every follower to his chosen lord. In the mediæval romances this devotion comes to a centre not on the chosen lord, but on the chosen lady. A mystic love, in which the knight vows himself in complete devotion to his lady, becomes the ideal of conduct. Love is a swoon and a possession, in which the self is lost, and merged in the higher life of the other self. There is a curious parallel between the language of this mystic love and the language of religious mysticism; and often the passion of love seems fused with the ardour of religion—a fusion for which the worship of the Virgin, one of the great features of chivalry, readily prepared the way. “The love of God and the ladies,” says Hallam, “was enjoined as a single duty”; and the rules of one of the many orders of chivalry command knights to honour above all ladies, “because from them after God comes all the honour that men can acquire.” Here we may see a conception of love as an “enabling virtue,” which transforms and transfigures the lover. And yet the greatest example of such love in the romances is Sir Lancelot, and Sir Lancelot was guilty of adultery with Guinevere, the wife of Arthur. This is an instance only too typical of the treatment of love in the circles of



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chivalry. Married life does not fare well in the romances. "But a wedded man," says Lancelot in Malory, "I think never to be, for if I were, then should I be bound to tarry with my wife and leave arms and tournaments." The Countess of Champagne, being consulted on this vexed point, held that there could be no true love between husband and wife. The "Flower of Love" of Andrew the Chaplain, which lays down something of a code, begins with the rule that "marriage is not a good excuse for rejecting love," and proceeds to the rule that "who does not conceal, cannot love."

It seems after all a wise instinct which leads women to-day, when threatened with the death of chivalry if they pursue too eager a quest for woman's rights, to look askance on the proffered bargain. The obverse side of chivalry shows the lover devoted to his mistress in a mystical abandonment and surrender of himself; the reverse side shows the mistress expected to surrender herself to the love of her worshipping knight. There is much that is noble in the ideal. But if it is judged by its fruits, it was a thing of little worth. Sentiment, however etherealized, is a poor guide of conduct. Better, perhaps, than all the romances of the Middle Ages are the precepts of solid prose which we may find in the canon law of marriage of the mediæval Church. For the Church, however imperfectly, had attained a far higher view than



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that which inspired the sentimental individualism of the lay life of the castle. She knew, and she sought to enforce, the value of the integrity of the family and the sanctity of the married state. She set her face like a flint against divorce, and indeed she pushed the doctrine of the indissolubility of marriage almost to excess. She recognized the rights of children, and she sought to insist on the legitimization by subsequent marriage of children born out of wedlock. She sought to protect the wife by the administration of the law of marriage in the ecclesiastical courts, and she took her stand for the principle of the equality of the sexes in all the rights and duties of marriage. Not the least of the services of the Catholic Church to the mediæval world was her attempt to uphold, in a world too readily prone to a mixture of sentiment and sensuality, the Christian ideal of marriage.

5. Renaissance and Reformation are twin names, which seem to suggest some magic of novelty and to breathe, as it were, a morning freshness after a sultry night. The name Renaissance is, indeed, a name which has been sadly over-driven and over-emphasized. There was plenty of learning in the days before the Revival of Learning, and our old world did not cease to be itself when new thoughts and feelings swam into its ken. But it is perhaps not untrue to say that a new and more vivid sense

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of personality awoke to life in the Italy of the fifteenth century, and that a richer sense of the potential splendours of womanhood began to pervade men's minds. The heroines of the Renaissance can stand by themselves, without any mantle of chivalry for their protection. Caterina Sforza, *prima donna d'Italia*, was a woman of heroic mould, who could play her part and nobly defend her heritage in a world of conflicting villainies. The full blossom of human personality, which is the note of fifteenth-century Italy, was a blossom not confined to men. Men and women drank deep together from the new fountains of knowledge and inspiration. The Romola of George Eliot has many parallels in the history of Renaissance scholarship. The emancipating influence of the New Learning emancipated women also, and the ranks of English scholarship in the sixteenth century include not only Colet and More, but also Lady Jane Grey and Queen Elizabeth. Vittoria Colonna, the friend of Michael Angelo, wrote verses which still shine in the splendid skies of Italian poetry. "There was no question," writes one of the historians of the Renaissance, "of women's rights or female emancipation, simply because the thing itself was a matter of course. The educated woman, no less than the man, strove naturally after a characteristic and complete individuality." It

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must be added, alas ! that there was no question either of the low level of morality in the great Italian cities of these days. Some of the greatest women of the day recall the "companions" of ancient Athens. The salon of the courtesan Imperia was an intellectual centre in the Rome of Julius II. In her room, full of the most beautiful art of the Renaissance, she accompanied on the harp her own verse or that of her adorers. She died at the age of twenty-six ; and her tomb was inscribed to the memory of "Imperia, the Roman courtesan, worthy of a name so great, who was an example of beauty rare among mankind."

We should be pointing an antithesis at the expense of truth, if we claimed for the German Reformation all the morality which the Italian Renaissance lacked. The German Reformation was a revolt against the whole system of the mediæval Church ; and that system had so intertwined morality with the form of its religion that both suffered in the revolt. But it is at any rate true to say that the whole influence of Luther went to the extension and purification of the life of the family. He rejected the whole idea of ascetic monasticism. Priest as he was, he took to wife a woman who had been a nun, and his marriage is a striking index of his general belief in the relation of the sexes as something normal, which could be elevated into an institution of moral and

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religious value for each and every Christian, clerk or lay, professed or unprofessed. As he extended, so he sought to spiritualize the scope of the family. "The family," he believed, "is the seed and antitype of the Church; communion in family worship is the peculiar bond of its life; and the Church is primarily founded on the family devotions and religious instruction conducted by its head." This belief in the family and its worship as the foundation-stone of any Christian Church led Luther to a higher ideal of Christian marriage than the mediæval Church had ever attained. Marriage is no mere institution for the begetting and rearing of children; its end lies rather in the intercommunion of husband and wife, through love, in a common religious life. But though Luther may emphasize this communion, he is quite clear that the husband is the head of the wife. Patriarchalism is an essential feature of the Lutheran family. If the wife is equal to her husband in Christ, she is subject to her husband in the regulation of the family. His physical superiority is the index of a general superiority ordained of God. He is the priest of his household, and since he conducts its worship he must also regulate its life. Luther believed in "the subjugation of women." And nobly as he sought to spiritualize marriage into a religious communion, he did not altogether succeed in avoiding an

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older and less noble view. Marriage, after all (he felt) was at best a divinely instituted limit on human concupiscence—a “bridle” and “cure” for original sin, which limited and cleansed such sin by its ordination, but which, just for that reason, remained connected with sin. Here we may trace an Augustinian element in Luther; for it had been Augustine’s method to explain the institutions of social life—property, for instance, equally with marriage—as things divinely ordained *propter remedium peccatorum*; things at one and the same time good, in virtue of their remedial character, and evil, in the sense of their being forms, however limited, of those sins of greed and of concupiscence which they were meant to bridle and cure.

The further developments of the Reformation led to views different from those of Luther. Calvinism, when it passed into English Puritanism, became a gospel of “soul-liberty,” which naturally allied itself with a cult of the natural rights of the individual, and readily tended to vindicate a full and equal share in those rights for either sex. English Nonconformity has inherited this tradition. In some of its forms it has found room for women as preachers and teachers. At the least it has given to the women who belong to its congregations the same rights in the election of officers as those which belong to men.\*

\* See Appendix.

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6. The historical factors which have served to raise, or helped to determine, the problem of the proper position of women in recent times have been largely economic. The Industrial Revolution created the woman worker, working on her own account by the side of men in factory or mine. This was a new problem for the world to solve; for though women have always worked, they had worked before in the house, under a domestic system, and their position was a domestic question for the household, and not a public question for the state. To-day the large and growing surplus of women, which may be traced in the statistics of population in England, and, if to a less extent, in Germany, makes the problem at once harder of solution, and more imperatively urgent. Meanwhile the democratic ideas which began to disturb the waters in the course of the French Revolution, and continued to ripple outwards in widening circles throughout the nineteenth century, have raised in the twentieth the problem of the extension of the suffrage—which is nowadays given to nearly every man—to some at any rate of the sex which has hitherto been excluded. The logic of the woman's claim is one which it is difficult, if not impossible, to disprove. Yet there is one caution which it is perhaps permissible to urge. Politics do not go by logic alone. If they did, they would be very much simpler. In practical



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affairs, men are more apt to be moved by what sounds sensible than by what seems logical. And a cause needs to have been championed steadily for years, and to have been put into practice in many small ways that have proved tolerably successful, before the world's coarse thumb and finger approve it as something "sensible."

There are many other factors, besides the revolution of industry and the progress of democracy, which have made the modern world a different place for one-half of its inhabitants. Law has changed, and the position of women has changed with the position of the law. Till 1869 the married woman in England hardly possessed any rights of property; since 1882 she has had a fuller and more independent control than is enjoyed by women in most other countries. The Divorce Act of 1857 was a charter of liberation to many women in the poorer classes, for whom divorce, requiring as it did the passing of an Act of Parliament in each case, had hitherto been impossible. The concession of the municipal suffrage to women has been a first step towards the recognition of their rights of citizenship. Socialist teaching and practice have brought, or are likely to bring, new changes. Maternity benefit is already given: state endowment of motherhood is already proposed.

Nothing, perhaps, would change the position

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of women more in the future than an increased facility of divorce, such as is already urged, under the plea of equality of the sexes, by many ardent enthusiasts. The experience of the nineteenth century suggests that the acquisition of the full suffrage might leave women, as it has left men, in much the same state as before. The experience of all history suggests that nothing touches the life of the family and the position of women more closely than the law of marriage. The danger of the woman's movement is that women may assert their individuality at the price of the solidarity which, all through recorded time, has been their glory and their strength. The wife is one with her husband in a common will, which is the will of neither, because it is the will of both. Wife and husband are linked in the common intimacy and sanctity of begetting and nourishing the body and mind of the future race. The family is the divinest unit of all secular life. Motherhood is the purest and tenderest consecration which can transfigure humanity. To many men, who have been faithful lovers of the mothers that bore them and the wives that bore their children, equality of suffrage and equality of divorce will seem to be but dust in the balance when weighed against the golden stuff of motherhood.

Perhaps they need not be weighed against one another. To many they will seem to be com-



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plements; and the emancipation of women will appear the only way to a perfect motherhood. If it is so, it is a happy thing. For it is at any rate certain that the ethical idea of womanhood which we make for ourselves must be one that will reconcile the individual rights of women, as full persons in a democratic state, with their social rights and duties in that most precious of societies, of which they are reigning queens. And the reconciliation of the democratic state with the solid integrity of the family is not so easy but that it needs much thought. For the one seeks to make all free; but the other seeks to make all bound together in a common service of love. And the one would make all equal; but the other rests on the difference of its units, and seeks to unite their differences in an ordered hierarchy.

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## CHAPTER II.

### *THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN TO HISTORY.*

C. M. ADY.

“**W**OMAN is made for one end only by blind Nature, but man for several.” This curiously simple assumption, expressed in its crudest form by Rudyard Kipling, serves as an epitome of the difficulties and limitations under which women have made their contribution to history. The deep-rooted idea that women have but one profession and can claim no direct share in the work of the world has confronted us in every age and made itself felt in every department of activity. In the sphere of Art and Letters tradition and circumstances have done their best to tie down women to the grade of the gifted amateur. The laws of every civilized nation have rendered the contribution of women to Government exceptional rather than normal. The Church has, indeed, from the earliest time recognized and claimed women’s work, and the history of the

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Religious Orders is a splendid record of woman's achievement in a profession that has always been open to her. Nevertheless, the Church must of necessity be a conservative institution, and while it has afforded scope for the woman worker, it has, at the same time, fettered her with the chains of ecclesiastical tradition. In any attempt at estimating the contribution of women to history, the limitations under which that contribution has been made must never be forgotten. They have set a peculiar stamp, both for good and for ill, upon women's work.

1. Perhaps no one has suffered more from the persistent refusal of society to allow women to be professional than the woman artist. In the most fertile periods of artistic production the line of separation between the artist and the artisan was practically non-existent. The masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance were produced under conditions approximating to those of the craft-guild, and a painter began his career by mixing colours and preparing canvases in his master's studio. Thus few women were given the opportunity of acquiring the technique of an artist. Great ladies, of the houses of Este and Gonzaga among others, were the friends and patrons of artists, indefatigable collectors and competent critics. But Isabella d'Este did not paint her own

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pictures any more than a great lady of to-day designs and executes her own dresses. There were, however, some women artists of the Renaissance, conspicuous among them being the four who worked in Bologna. "They were," says their biographer, "women belonging to obscure and sometimes to poor families who achieved a name and fame by their own exertions before or independently of marriage."\* Caterina dei Vigri (1413-1463), Saint and Abbess, found in her art a means of expression for her fervent devotion. Properzia dei Rossi's (1500-1530) delicate fingers caught the fancy of the hour by elaborate and exquisite carving upon peach, apricot, and cherry stones. From this humble beginning she rose to an honoured position among the first sculptors of the day. Lavinia Fontana's (1552-1612) training as a portrait-painter began in the studio of her artist-father. Elisabetta Sirani (1638-1665), also a painter's daughter, won deserved renown as the follower of Guido Reni. The contribution of these women to the Art of the Renaissance may be compared with that of Angelica Kauffmann to the British School of the eighteenth century. In both these golden ages of Art some women at least were able to break through the bonds which bound their sex and to play their part in the great movement of the day.

\* Laura Ragg. "The Woman Artists of Bologna."

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If women's achievements in the realm of Art serve chiefly to illustrate the limitations which beset them, it is far otherwise in that of letters. Here the line between the amateur and the professional is less rigidly drawn. Quietly, unobtrusively and in their own homes for the most part, women have pursued the occupation which even eighteenth-century guardians of propriety reluctantly accepted as ladylike. The result of their labour has been a unique and glorious contribution to literature. Through the mists of classical antiquity looms the name of Sappho, "The Poetess," whose renown in her own day would be sufficient testimony to her poetical genius even if the modern world did not possess the superb ode to Aphrodite and other fragments of her lyrical poems which have come down to us. Sappho is the first of a noble company. Held in check during the Middle Ages, the stream of women poets and prose-writers began again with the Renaissance. From that time forward it flowed steadily on until, in due course, came the great flood of women novelists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Fanny Burney, Jane Austen, George Sand, Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, Charlotte Yonge—this list, which is typical rather than exhaustive, includes women differing widely from one another both in the nature and in the quality of their genius. Little as some of

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these authors may seem to have in common, a study of their work offers special opportunities for appreciating the contribution made by women to Letters. All alike have produced work which is peculiar to themselves and in no sense derivative. All, too, exhibit certain qualities which may fairly be attributed to their sex and to the conditions under which they worked. First among these qualities must be placed their amazing power of reproducing atmosphere. With the possible exception of George Sand, the women novelists had none of them a wide range of experience upon which to draw, but they transformed this apparent disadvantage into an opportunity for the fuller exercise of their powers. Upon the limited field at their command they poured out their whole stock of sympathy and patience, using to the utmost their powers of observation and intuition. Thus the practice of eminently womanly virtues enabled these writers of varied class and temperament to realize and express with unerring fidelity the society in which they moved.

“The inimitable Jane” found within the limits of her decorous country-house life all the material that she needed for her gentle yet ruthless exposure of the follies and absurdities of humanity. She supplies, moreover, the crowning example of a characteristic which has distinguished all the best work done by women, namely freedom from

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sentimentality. George Sand stands out in French literature as the great romantic, the chief of the idealists, as opposed to Balzac and the realists. Nevertheless, her highest achievement is the sympathetic treatment of the commonplace and the ugly in those matchless stories of French peasant life which spring from the heart of her experience. The nearest English parallel to *La Petite Fadette* and *La Mare au Diable* is undoubtedly *Silas Marner*. No one understood rural England so entirely as George Eliot, and no one could have portrayed with greater fidelity and charm the bovine slowness, the narrowness of view, and, withal, the many sterling qualities which lay hidden beneath the unprepossessing exterior of the rustic society centring round the "Rainbow Inn."

Writing with equal sureness of touch from a wholly different milieu, Charlotte Yonge has left a lasting memorial of the effect of the Oxford Movement upon the upper middle classes of the Mid-Victorian era. To her peculiar genius it belonged to invest the baptisms and confirmations of her overflowing Anglican households with the glamour of high romance. The point of view of her *Mays* and her *Underwoods* is already largely foreign to us. We are impatient of their scruples and overwhelmed by their solemnity. Yet the secret of their attraction lies in the fact that they



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are intensely real people. Charlotte Yonge has supplied a clue to the inner meaning of the great revival which gives historical as well as literary value to her work.

The characteristics common to the women novelists and their variations in each individual is a fascinating study which we cannot do more than touch upon here. Yet it is worth noticing that these authors are almost all profound psychologists. Dickens and Thackeray draw their characters upon extraordinarily simple lines as compared with Jane Austen or George Eliot. Mr. Chadband and Charles Honeyman, for example, stand revealed as humbugs pure and simple upon the first moment of their appearance and their expressions of religious fervour are merely grotesque. Nicholas Bulstrode, the hypocrite of *Middlemarch*, on the other hand, is a genuinely religious man capable nevertheless of theft and fraud. Every phase in his life-long struggle between motives of self-interest and of piety brings fresh surprises, whereas the two former heroes have nothing new to reveal throughout the vicissitudes of their career. As to Jane Austen, the wonderful subtlety of her character-drawing hardly needs illustration. Her psychology amounts to genius and her men and women unfold themselves with every word which they utter.

Looked upon as a whole, the supreme value of



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women's contribution to Letters has been the representation of the woman's point of view. Without Madame de Sévigné we should lack the woman's commentary upon the Grand Siècle. Among the host of poet-lovers Elizabeth Barrett Browning, in her *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, has set forth with haunting passion the woman's way of love. Women's achievements in literature, in spite of limiting circumstances, are full of hope for a future in which the restrictions which have hampered them must grow less every year. To-day the class of professional women affords a natural source for the rise of the woman of genius. Moreover, the work of poets such as Alice Meynell and Margaret Woods, and of novelists such as Lucas Malet, May Sinclair and Marcelle Tinayre proves that the modern woman can take advantage of her wider opportunities while preserving the peculiar qualities which are the hard-won heritage of earlier generations.

2. There have been many women rulers throughout the course of history, and of these a strangely large proportion have been described as "more man than woman." Zenobia, says Gibbon, "governed with manly counsels Palmyra, Syria, and the East." Christina of Sweden "was one of Nature's mistakes; she was intended for a man." The chain of reasoning underlying these and a hundred

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kindred statements is obvious. Government is the prerogative of man ; certain women have governed well and wisely ; therefore these women are freaks of nature, abnormal manifestations of their sex. Yet there is an alternative explanation which is on the whole more convincing. Ruling is not the prerogative of a single sex ; women no less than men have certain qualities which attain to their highest development in government ; a great queen is not necessarily an exception to her sex, she is rather a woman who has had exceptional opportunities of proving her powers.

In what, then, if the latter alternative be accepted, does the peculiar aptitude of women for government consist ? The question is by no means easy to answer, owing to the immense varieties of type to be found among the queens of history. There have been heroic defenders of their country such as Zenobia of Palmyra and Boadicea. From the days of Semiramis, the half-mythical founder of Nineveh and Babylon, there has been a long succession of great builders and patrons of the Arts. There have been religious fanatics like Mary Tudor and unscrupulous adventurers like Catherine of Russia. There have been constitutional queens and despotic queens, some who were the tools of their ministers and others who made their ministers the instruments of their will. There have been queens who

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renounced love and marriage for their country's good, and queens like Cleopatra and Mary Stuart, who sacrificed their country to their private passions. Among this motley throng, however, it is possible to distinguish certain qualities which have helped to render women great and successful rulers.

Prominent among such qualities is woman's capacity for detail. The state, in one important aspect, is merely an enlarged household, and women in every age have done good service in detecting and cleansing its dusty corners. The internal reform of the unwieldy dominions under the sway of the House of Austria had been mooted some three centuries before the accession of Maria Theresa. Yet it was left to this woman to tackle the problem with any attempt at thoroughness. Working through ministers of her own choosing, she remodelled the constitution, reorganized the army, and carried through economic and educational reforms upon a comprehensive scale. Thanks to Maria Theresa, Austria emerged from a crisis in her existence with renewed confidence and strength. Queen Victoria also is a shining example of women's persistence in routine work. She insisted on mastering the details of the innumerable threads of government which passed through her hands, and supported by the first-hand knowledge thus obtained, her natural independence of character

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became a powerful factor in her country's welfare. In her, too, is seen the effect of woman's tendency to individualize, which, in spite of obvious dangers, has given to the reign of every queen a peculiar atmosphere of enthusiasm. Her ministers were her personal friends, services to England were services to herself, and the magnetism of the personal touch was everywhere apparent.

The era of democracy and of social reform has brought with it numerous instances of woman's capacity for detail. Perhaps the greatest is that of Florence Nightingale, who created the modern nursing profession, and, from her invalid couch, pressed much-needed army reforms upon a reluctant War Office. For the rest, the work of Octavia Hill, Beatrice Webb, Constance Smith, Gertrude Tuckwell, and many another modern social reformer gives striking proof of the value of women's contribution to Government.

Women's achievements in Government, as in Letters, are in part the outcome of the disabilities of their sex. "Rulers," says Creighton, "are always trying to make the best of a bad business," and women have undergone age-long apprenticeship in that difficult art. Catherine dei Medici can hardly be quoted as an example of a successful queen. Nevertheless, her chief opponent credited her with an heroic attempt to make the best of a well-nigh hopeless situation. "Poor woman,"

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said Henry of Navarre, " with her husband dead, five small children on her hands and two families scheming to seize the throne ! I am surprised that she did not do even worse." The reason lay in Catherine's extraordinary capacity for passive endurance. Slighted by her husband, detested and despised as the Italian banker's daughter by the mass of her subjects, ill-requited for her labours on behalf of her worthless sons, she still clung to her post, and in so doing preserved the French Crown from what might well have been irretrievable disaster. A nobler instance of this same power of dealing with adverse circumstances is to be found in Christina of Sweden. When at the age of eighteen, Christina took the reins of government into her own hands, Sweden was suffering from inability to live up to an over-glorious reputation. The ministers and soldiers who had worked under Gustavus Adolphus were continuing a fruitless war in the vain hope of obtaining terms commensurate with the brilliant exploits of their master, earlier in the struggle. In a moment Christina faced the unpalatable truth that Sweden had nothing to gain by going on fighting, and that meanwhile the country was being brought to ruin. In the teeth of her ministers' opposition she insisted upon modifying the Swedish demands and thus procured her country's inclusion in the Peace of Westphalia.

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It was a "bad business" both for herself and Sweden when Christina convinced herself that she must become a Roman Catholic. Yet once more she made the best of it. Clear-sighted and self-sacrificing, she saw that the peculiar circumstances in which she was placed left no course open to her save abdication, and she only waited to surrender her crown until she had secured her country's adherence to the successor of her choice. "Christina," it has been said, "is one of those few sovereigns who have made history by sheer force of personal character." Male historians claim her as a man, and cite her fondness for masculine attire in proof of their case. But, this and other superficial traits notwithstanding, her most fundamental qualities bear the impress of her training in the exacting school of womanhood.

Nowhere perhaps do women's maternal instincts find wider scope than in government. Dante, writing of his ideal monarch, says that "the good of men is more loved by him, than by any other"; the queen who lavishes upon her country the wealth of her mother-love comes near to realizing his great conception. In Elizabeth of England, with all her faults, we have a magnificent example of a woman who identified herself with her country's good. Her whole self was devoted to the cause of England; her mendacity, her duplicity, her very caprices were for England's

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sake. Herein lies the great contrast between Elizabeth and her ill-fated rival. Mary Stuart's undying charm, her loyalty to her religion and her friends, and above all the royal gallantry with which she faced death, may seem to weigh the balances heavily in her favour. Yet Mary's centre of interest was not her country but herself; she could never say with Elizabeth, "Far above all earthly treasure, I esteem my people's love." To measure the effect of Elizabeth's devotion is to unfold a page which is unique in English history, save perhaps for that which is even now being written. It is enough to remind ourselves here that no Briton can afford to belittle the contribution of women to government, seeing that it was "under a woman's captaincy" that England won her place among the nations.

3. There is a striking passage in the "Pilgrim's Progress" which sets forth John Bunyan's view of the position of women in the Christian Church. "I will now speak," he says through the mouth of Gaius, "on the behalf of women, to take away their reproach. For, as death and the curse came into the world by a woman, so also did life and health: God sent forth His Son, made of a woman. . . . When the Saviour was come, women rejoiced in Him before either man or angel. I read not that man ever gave unto Christ so much as one groat; but



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the women followed Him, and ministered to Him of their substance. 'Twas a woman that washed His feet with tears ; and a woman that anointed His body to the burial. They were women that wept when He was going to the cross ; and women that followed Him from the cross ; and that sat over against His sepulchre when He was buried. They were women that were first with Him at His resurrection morn, and women that brought tidings first to His disciples that He was risen from the dead. Women therefore are highly favoured, and show by these things that they are sharers with us in the grace of life." The conception of men and women as alike " sharers in grace " is a fundamental principle of Christian doctrine, and, in spite of a certain timidity on the part of the Church in the application of that principle, the great ideal of equality set forth in the Epistle to the Galatians has never been lost sight of : " There can be no male and female : for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus." From the days of its infancy until the close of the Middle Ages, at any rate, the Church offered opportunities to women which were denied to them in every other sphere. How richly women responded to these opportunities can only be indicated here.

From all that we can learn of early Christian society it is clear that from the first the Church could not have done its work without the help

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of women. S. Paul's Epistles contain several references to the assistance which he derived from women in the course of his ministry. "They laboured with me in the gospel," he writes of the two Philippian women whom he exhorted, "to be of the same mind in the Lord" (Phil. iv. 2-3). In the Epistle to the Romans (xvi. 1-2) he makes mention of "Phœbe our sister, who is a servant of the Church that is at Cenchrea," commending her to the good offices of Christians as one who "herself also hath been a succourer of many, and of mine own self." "This passage," says Origen, "shows that women also were set in the ministry of the Church, in which office Phœbe was placed in the Church in Cenchrea." The duties of the deaconesses, as these women officers of the Church came to be called, were many and various. They instructed women preparing for baptism, and assisted at their immersion and anointing. They carried the Blessed Sacrament to the sick, they had charge of the Sanctuary and kept the doors on the women's side of the church. They cared for the widows, the sick and the poor. Owing to the conditions of society then prevailing, these ministrations to women could only be performed by women. Thus the Order of Deaconesses sprang out of the needs of the Church. They were set apart by the Bishop in Ordination, with a prayer for special gifts of the Holy Ghost in order that the deaconess

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might "worthily accomplish the work now committed unto her, to the glory and the praise of Thy Christ." The Order flourished in the East for some time after it had died out in the West. At Constantinople, the stronghold of ancient civilization, there were in the days of S. Chrysostom no less than forty deaconesses attached to the Church of S. Sophia; and wherever Eastern influences penetrated women were found taking active share in the ministrations of the Church. It was the advent of the barbarians, making religious life outside the cloister more and more impossible, which led to the cessation of the deaconess's activities for some thirteen centuries. "Her decline and disappearance," writes the Dean of Wells, "coincides with the increasing darkness that fell on Church and world alike."

When women ceased to be ordained officers of the Church their work had already begun to take a fresh direction with the development of the religious community. The mantle of the early Christian deaconess fell upon the nun of the Middle Ages. Virgins dedicated to the service of their Lord held a recognized position in the Church from the very earliest times. At first they lived in their own homes, but by the fourth century they had begun to seek the seclusion of the convent. In the sixth century their great contribution to the Church begins with S. Benedict, the founder

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of Western monasticism. At Monte Cassino, S. Benedict's monks led a common life, in obedience to a fixed rule, which aimed at no extravagance; of asceticism but rather at the employment of every faculty of the individual for the glory of God and for the common good. Five miles from Monte Cassino, S. Benedict's twin-sister, S. Scholastica, ruled over a community of women, shaping the requirements of the Benedictine Rule to the needs and capacities of her own sex. She is the patroness and the model of the innumerable communities of women who have followed the rule of her brother during thirteen centuries.

The joint work of S. Benedict and S. Scholastica has many parallels. S. Patrick made Ireland the home of the Saints, the great nation of monks and missionaries. One of his converts was S. Bridget, who is associated with him among the special patrons of Ireland, and whose Rule, framed for her own community at Kildare, was followed by the vast majority of her fellow countrywomen professing the religious life. Women, again, had their full share in that golden age of English monasticism which opened with the Celtic mission to Northumbria. S. Ebba, the sister of S. Oswald and the friend of S. Cuthbert, the great Abbess Hilda of Whitby, and her successor, S. Elleda, were all daughters of the royal house of Northumbria. Another royal Abbess was the East Anglian,

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S. Etheldreda, "one of the first and most popular of canonized Englishwomen." These Anglo-Saxon communities won as high a reputation for their learning as for their saintliness. The nuns embroidered gorgeous ecclesiastical vestments, but they also copied manuscripts and adorned them with miniatures, while the Bible, the Fathers, and the chief classical authors were included in their studies. When S. Boniface needed helpers for his missionary work in Germany, he turned to the religious communities, knowing that they could send out women fully equipped for the work. S. Walburga and thirty companions went out from the Abbey of Wimborne at his call, and women worked side by side with men in upholding the splendid missionary tradition of English monasticism. Once more, the coming of the Friars gave to the world not only S. Francis but S. Clare, and, in the seventeenth century, S. Francis of Sales found the most sympathetic exponent of his ideals in S. Jeanne de Chantal.

Men and women have shared the labours and the glories of the Religious Orders throughout history. No less honourable is the woman's part in that wider contribution to the Church made by the whole company of the Saints. It is enough to recall the names of the chief Virgin-Martyrs—S. Catherine, S. Cecilia, S. Agnes, S. Lucy, S. Agatha—to realize how freely women have

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witnessed to Christ with their life-blood. Patient sufferers such as the flower-like S. Fina, of S. Gimignano; mothers like S. Monica; queens like S. Margaret of Scotland and S. Elizabeth of Hungary, who have softened by their gracious lives the harshness of mediæval courts; these are but a few fragrant examples of women's contribution to the fullness of the Christian character.

Saints, like great works of art, defy analysis, and there is little to be gained from an attempt to mark off certain types of sainthood as characteristically feminine. Nevertheless, the peculiar distinction of women's contribution to the Church may, perhaps, be found in the fuller exercise of those qualities which have distinguished women's achievements in Government and in Letters.

(a) Among those geniuses of the spiritual life whom we call mystics, many of the greatest are women. May we not ascribe their power of penetrating the hidden mysteries of heaven to the same gifts of sympathy, imagination and insight which enabled the women writers to excel in the reproduction of atmosphere upon a lowlier plane? Are not the receptive faculties and the absence of self-assertion which characterised the novelists transfigured in the self-abandonment, the self-emptying of the mystics? The value of the

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mystics' contribution to history cannot be appraised in a few sentences. Nevertheless, there are three points about these remarkable women which must be noticed. The first is the sureness of their grasp upon the eternal verities revealed to them. "Well I wote that heaven and earth and all that is made is great, large, fair and good," wrote Juliana of Norwich, "but the cause why it sheweth so little to my sight was for I saw it in the presence of Him that is the Maker." This obscure woman of the fourteenth century held the key to all the riddles of human life: its most crushing sorrows and its deepest perplexities were alike to her "revelations of Divine Love," because she viewed them all "in the presence of Him that is the Maker." Here she is at one with S. Catherine of Siena, of whom it has been said that "the central fact of her nature was her rapt and absolute perception of the Love of God as the supreme reality in the Universe." Secondly, the women mystics have been peculiarly felicitous in their endeavours to convey their high experiences to others. Without Juliana's "Revelations of Divine Love," or S. Theresa's *Life and the "Interior Castle,"* or the Letters of S. Catherine of Siena, the literature of mysticism would be robbed of its choicest gems. Thus women's power of expression and understanding of human nature have brought glimpses of the radiant kingdom of



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the mystics to a dim-eyed world. Lastly, it is important to notice the power wielded by the great women mystics in their active life. Strong in the possession of the heavenly vision, S. Catherine of Siena instructed Popes and moulded the politics of fourteenth-century Italy. S. Theresa reformed the Carmelite Order, and S. Catherine of Genoa acted as the working head of the best organized hospital of her day. Their intellectual and practical gifts were rendered infinitely greater by the spiritual forces which set them in motion.

(b) Again, it is not queens alone who have contributed to women's achievements in government. Both abbesses and educationalists witness to the importance of the art of ruling in women's work for the Church. S. Hilda's wise rule over her double community of monks and nuns at Whitby called forth peculiar gifts of organization and judgment. Yet perhaps a modern example brings out still more clearly the amount of statesmanship involved in the work of an abbess. Mother Mabel Digby's devoted service as Superior-General of the Society of the Sacred Heart ended, with her death, in 1911.\* During her tenure of office she controlled the work of this great international community in every country in Europe; she organized important extensions of its sphere

\* Pollen. "Mother Mabel Digby."

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in the New World, and she guided the policy of her Order during the troublous times of the separation between Church and State in France and the expulsion of the nuns from their Mother-House in Paris. To those who have read the story of her life, it is plain that the keynote of her brilliant career was the completeness of her self-sacrificing love. Turning to the educationalists, the English Church has special cause for gratitude to those women who determined that the Church should not lag behind in the movement for the higher education of their sex. The recently published Memoir of Alice Ottley\* is a wonderful record of how a great school was built up by one who identified herself with the joys and sorrows of every child under her care and who made every detail of the work her personal concern. Both Mabel Digby and Alice Ottley possessed many gifts which fitted them for their high calling, but the closest bond between them lies in the fact that the love which they lavished upon the subjects of their respective kingdoms was but one aspect of their love of God. The supreme value of their contribution to government, together with that of many other women of whom they are representative, consists in its single-hearted consecration *ad maiorem gloriam Dei*.

\* James. "Alice Ottley: A Memoir."

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In comparison with the great achievements of the past, the future of women's work for the Church may seem to present few possibilities. In all other spheres women's opportunity is increasing rapidly ; in the Church it is little more than stationary. It was an ill day for the Church of England when Florence Nightingale could write : " She gave me neither work to do for her nor education for it." We can recognize thankfully that such an accusation grows less true every year ; nevertheless, much remains to be done before the reproach is wholly blotted out. Perhaps the most hopeful aspect of the present situation is the way in which women have made a sphere for themselves in every branch of the Church by rising to meet the new responsibilities and opportunities which present themselves to all Christians in modern times.

" My Socialism grows entirely out of my religion," wrote Margaret Ethel Macdonald, and she speaks as the representative of a noble band of women who have realized that as members of the Christian body it is impossible for them to remain indifferent to the economic and social conditions under which their brothers and sisters in Christ must live out their lives. The vital connection between religion and social reform is at once the lever by which the barriers between different creeds can be broken down and also the door

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through which women can enter upon their rightful share in the work of the Christian Church.

Yet why should it be necessary to seek out a door? Why should the official position of women in the Church lag so far behind the actual value of their work? The answer raises the whole problem of the true nature of the limitations under which the contribution of women to history has been made. In every age it has been assumed that owing to natural limitations women can only make their contribution in special directions. In every age women have had to prove that this or that sphere of activity was not outside their scope. They have had to convince an incredulous world that Art, Letters, Government, Religion itself were departments of life in which women could work with effect, and only after they have proved their worth has the field of their labours been officially recognized as one which women are fitted to occupy. But the amazing fact is that hitherto they have always succeeded. Where women have broken through the artificial limitations imposed by assumption, they have not as yet come up against a natural limitation which has barred their further advance. Thus in every generation the sphere of women's work grows wider, at first tentatively, and only gradually winning recognition in each new department by the force of successful achievement.

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Any attempt to estimate women's contribution to history as a whole cannot fail to be inadequate, and there are many great women whose names are not even mentioned here. The chief aim of this chapter has been to draw from history a two-fold lesson as to the function of women in the world.

Women possess certain qualities which give distinction to their work, but hitherto there is no evidence to show that their distinctive contribution can only be made in special directions. Rather, the experience of history goes far to prove that they are capable of making it in any and every department of life.

Women's distinctive qualities render their contribution of real importance to the world, but the value of their achievements is increased a hundred-fold when these qualities are hallowed by religion. Whether a woman's activities are exercised under the discipline of a religious order, or whether they are inspired by those elemental religious instincts which are wider than any Church, the verdict of history is the same.

Woman's capacity for the spiritual life is still her crowning glory, as it was on the day when the Virgin of Galilee was chosen to be the Mother of God.

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## CHAPTER III.

### *THE MOVEMENT FOR INTELLECTUAL TRAINING.*

CLARA E. COLLET.

" I BLUSHED and looked excessive silly to be caught in the act, but the affair which I have endeavoured to keep secret is discovered and I must bear the reflection of those who think me very presuming in attempting to be wise. I shall never aim at talking upon subjects of that kind, but the little I may gain by these lectures will make me take more pleasure in hearing others talk." Mrs. Delany (1700-1788) had been the widow of Alexander Pendarves for several years, and was nearly forty when she was detected in the act of studying cosmography. A woman of great intellectual ability and fine character, establishing kindly relations with every one she met, she unconsciously wrote the best contemporary history of women's life in the upper classes in the eighteenth century, which has come down to us in her " Autobiography and Letters." In these volumes we obtain glimpses of the pathetic

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if unattractive figure of Elizabeth Elstob, the Anglo-Saxon scholar. Miss Elstob (1683-1756) was the daughter of a merchant-adventurer of Newcastle. Her mother, who died when she was eight years old, had imbued her with a love of study. "Her guardians, who entertained different sentiments, discouraged as much as they were able her progress in literature, as improper for her sex, but their efforts were to no purpose, for she had contracted too great a fondness for literary studies to be diverted from the prosecution of them." She accompanied her brother to Oxford, and was the companion of all his severe studies, and published an Anglo-Saxon grammar in 1715. After his death she found great difficulty in earning a living. "She originally possessed a genteel fortune," which, "by pursuing too much the drug called learning, she did not know how to manage." In mediæval times Elizabeth Elstob could have found happiness in some monastic institution which would have relieved her of the trouble of looking after her fortune or of choosing her clothes, and would have encouraged her in her researches into Anglo-Saxon writings. Two centuries later she might have been comfortably installed as a college don in her beloved Oxford. As it was, when things were at their worst in 1739, she entered the family of the Duchess of Portland as governess to children under eight



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years of age, and remained there until her death. She could read eight languages, but "my Lord Oxford objects to her not speaking French," to which the Duchess replies that "she shall have a master for that or a maid to talk, and all she requires and hopes of Mrs. Elstob is to instruct her children in the principles of religion and virtue, to teach them to speak, read and understand English well, to cultivate their minds as far as their capacity will allow, and to keep them company in the house, and when her strength and health will permit, to take the air with them."

In 1792 Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) published her "Vindication of the Rights of Women." The title was not so aggressive as it sounds to modern ears, for every one at the time was accustomed to hearing of the rights of man, nor did it suggest the notion of demand for a vote. On the other hand, the contents, which surprise us at the present day by their moderation, appeared wildly revolutionary. It is simply a plea for the education of reason in women. "Men have been led into error by viewing education in a false light ; not considering it as the first step to form a being advancing gradually towards perfection, but only as a preparation for life." "In treating, therefore, of the manners of women, let us trace what we should endeavour to make them in order to co-

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operate, if the expression be not too bold, with the Supreme Being." "Let a woman cultivate her understanding without stopping to consider what character the husband may have whom she is destined to marry. Let her only determine, without being too anxious about present happiness, to acquire the qualities that ennoble a rational being, and a rough, inelegant husband may shock her taste without destroying her peace of mind. She will not model her soul to suit the frailties of her companion, but to bear with them; his character may be a trial, but not an impediment to virtue." "Let women's faculties have room to unfold, and their virtues to gain strength, and then determine where the whole sex must stand in the intellectual scale." "'Educate women like men,' says Rousseau, 'and the more they resemble our sex the less power will they have over us.' This is the very point I aim at. I do not wish them to have power over men, but over themselves." "It is justice, not charity, that is wanting in the world." "In tracing the causes that have degraded woman, I have confined my observations to such as universally act upon the morals and manners of the whole sex, and to me it appears clear that they all spring from want of understanding." "As a sex, men have better tempers than women, because they are occupied by pursuits that interest the head as well as the heart; and

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the steadiness of the head gives a healthy tempera-  
ture to the heart. People of sensibility have  
seldom good tempers." "Make the heart clean  
and give the head employment, and I will venture  
to predict that there will be nothing offensive in  
the behaviour." "Men are not aware of the  
misery they cause and the vicious weakness they  
cherish by only inciting women to render them-  
selves pleasing." "I have already inveighed  
against the custom of confining girls to their  
needle, and shutting them out from all political  
and civil employments; for by thus narrowing  
their minds they are rendered unfit to fulfil the  
peculiar duties which nature has assigned them."

Mary Wollstonecraft does not lay great stress  
on the economic position of women except as a  
means of raising their morality. After mentioning  
medicine and midwifery as especially suitable  
professions for women, she says: "Business of  
various kinds they might likewise pursue if they  
were educated in a more orderly manner, which  
might save many from common and legal prostitu-  
tion. Women would not then marry for a support  
as men accept of places under government, and  
neglect the implied duties; nor would an attempt  
to earn their own subsistence—a most laudable  
one!—sink them almost to the level of those poor  
abandoned creatures who live by prostitution. . . .  
The few employments open to women, so far from

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being liberal, are menial. As women educated like gentlewomen are never designed for the humiliating situation which necessity sometimes forces them to fill, those situations are considered in the light of a degradation; and they know little of the human heart, who need to be told that nothing so painfully sharpens sensibility as such a fall in life."

Mary Wollstonecraft had not received the training which she so passionately desired for other women. Maria Edgeworth (1767-1849), who set herself to work in the same year for the same object, had received every advantage denied to her predecessor in the field. She approached the task without bitterness and did not publish her "Letters for Literary Ladies" until 1795, after having revised them repeatedly to meet her father's criticisms. The "Vindication" leaves the effect of a magnificent thunderstorm. For the next forty years Miss Edgeworth's influence rather resembled a steady summer rain falling in the night.

"In vain, dear Caroline," writes Julia, "you urge me to think, I profess only to feel. . . . A woman's part in life is to please. Our amiable defects win more than our noblest virtues. Let us content ourselves to gain in love what we lose in esteem. What can women gain by reason?" "With all the energy of her soul, with all the

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powers of her understanding, I would have a woman endeavour to please those she esteems and loves," answers Caroline. Every woman writer of merit in those days seems to be fighting the waves of a sea of sentimentality or "sensibility," as it was called.

Miss Edgeworth states the enemy's case in a "letter from a Gentleman to his Friend upon the birth of a Daughter," and rarely has it been more fairly stated by an opponent or so sensibly by the enemy. "We see things as they are, but women must always see things through a veil, or cease to be women." "Their power over themselves has regularly been found to diminish in proportion as their power over others has increased." "Reason in its highest perfection seems not to arrive at the certainty of instinct; and truth, impressed upon the mind in early youth by the united voice of affection and authority, gives all the real advantages of the most investigating spirit of philosophy." "Superiority of mind must be united with great temper and generosity to be tolerated by those who are forced to submit to its influence." "Airs without graces no man thinks himself bound to bear."

To which replies the father: "The common fault of ignorant and ill-educated women is a love for dominion." "You appeal to history to prove to me that great calamities have ensued

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whenever the female sex has been indulged with liberty, yet you acknowledge that we cannot be certain whether these evils have been the effects of our trusting them with liberty, or of our not having previously instructed them in the use of it; upon the decision of this rests your whole argument." "Domestic life will be most preferred by those who have within their own minds a perpetual flow of fresh ideas, who cannot be tempted to dissipation, and who are most capable of enjoying all the real pleasure of friendship and of love." "I do not desire to make my daughter a musician, a painter, or a poetess; I do not desire to make her a botanist, a mathematician or a chemist; but I wish to give her the habit of industry and attention, the love of knowledge and the power of reasoning; these will enable her to attain excellence in any pursuit of science or of literature. Her tastes and her occupations will, I hope, be determined by her situation and by the wishes of her friends; she will consider all accomplishments and all knowledge as subordinate to her first object, the contributing to their happiness and her own."

In the same volume as the Letters, Miss Edgeworth published an "Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification," an analysis of the powers of exasperation possessed by an unreasonable woman. In 1798 "Practical Education" appeared, written in collaboration with her father. The high place

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assigned in these volumes to parents must have softened their hearts and stimulated their conscience.

Incidentally it may be noted that Miss Edgeworth suggests £300 a year (in addition to residence) as a salary which might induce gentlewomen to take up teaching as a liberal profession.

The Edgeworthian view that the strengthening of the understanding would deepen the emotions of the warm-hearted was soon to be fully demonstrated by the lives of Mary Carpenter (1807-1877) and Florence Nightingale (1820-1910). Mary Carpenter was educated in her father's school for boys, learning Latin, Greek, and mathematics. After many years of personal and devoted work for the education of the poorest children in Bristol, she published, in 1851, her "Reformatory Schools for the Children of the Perishing and Dangerous Classes and for Juvenile Offenders," advocating (1) good free day-schools; (2) feeding industrial schools, and (3) reformatory schools. From this time forward she was consulted in the drafting of educational bills and invited to give evidence before House of Commons Committees. Her untiring efforts were not limited to her own country, for India appealed strongly to her imagination, and during her visits to Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay she initiated experiments for the education



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of Hindu girls and the improvement of prison treatment. Florence Nightingale received the education of a son from her father, and there is now no need to point out how clearly that masculine mental discipline strengthened her in dealing with masculine officialism.

In 1827 the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was founded, and we find Mrs. Somerville (1780-1872) and Harriet Martineau (1802-1876) enlisted by Lord Brougham in its service for the popularization of theories of astronomy and political economy. Evidently Miss Edgeworth was fully justified in recording progress in her last novel "Helen" (1834). "Women are now so highly cultivated and political subjects are at present of so much importance, of such high interest, to all human creatures who live together in society," says Lady Davenant, "you can hardly expect, Helen, that you, as a rational being, can go through the world as it now is, without forming any opinion on points of public importance. You cannot, I conceive, satisfy yourself with the common namby-pamby little-missy phrase 'Ladies have nothing to do with politics.' "

But the supply of intelligent and well-educated women teachers had hardly increased. The daughters of the poorer clergy were perhaps the only persons who were ever definitely brought up with the idea of becoming teachers. Generally speaking,

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the better-bred governesses were women in reduced circumstances, who were painfully aware that they had nothing to impart. Mangnall's "Questions" (1800) and the "Child's Guide to Knowledge," "by a lady" (2nd edition, 1828) represent at its best the intellectual pabulum administered to the average girl in the average middle-class family for some seventy years.

In 1848, in his inaugural lecture at Queen's College, the Rev. F. D. Maurice showed how the Governesses' Benevolent Institution, beginning with a provision for distress among governesses, came to associate distress with incompetency, and hence to provide better instruction. In like manner, beginning as examiners, the professors (from King's College) soon found that before they could examine they must first teach, and for this purpose organized the classes that grew into Queen's College. Frances Mary Buss (1827-1894) and Dorothea Beale (1831-1906) were amongst the first students at the classes for teachers.

Queen's College was managed by men, with a man as the principal and women only as lady visitors. In 1849 Bedford College was founded, mainly through the efforts and generosity of Mrs. Reid, and here from the first the committees included men and women, and the Visitor who represented the head might be of either sex. Erasmus Darwin, Mark Pattison, and Anna

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Swanwick were the first three to hold this office after the incorporation of the College in 1869.

The teachers now had a chance to learn, but their next difficulty was to persuade the parents of their scholars to allow their daughters to be taught. Moreover, they knew, as only teachers can know, their ignorance of the effect of their teaching on the minds of their pupils. And more than anything else they desired to be sure that they were themselves aiming at a high standard; that their arithmetic and grammar and translation into foreign languages were not "feminine." From 1862 to 1869 Miss Emily Davies was secretary to a committee for obtaining admission for women to university examinations.

Popular education was now claiming attention. It is well to remember that if women in the upper classes envied their brothers for their educational opportunities, boys and girls generally were being brought up on an almost equal level of ignorance. In 1841-5 the marriage registers showed that one-third of the bridegrooms and practically half the brides could not write their names. Inability to write was not then such an indication of mental neglect as it is at the present time. Working people had little occasion to write to each other, and the power painfully acquired in early childhood died out from disuse. Janet Hamilton (1795-1873),

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poet and essayist, did not learn to write until she was fifty, and then copied printed letters. But she had learnt to read when she was four years old. Left at home at seven years of age to spin while her father and mother worked in the fields, married at fourteen to a journeyman shoemaker, the mother of ten children, she knew her Bible and her Shakspeare by heart. In an Address to Working Women she says : “ While we are called as a class to work and to minister, let us not forget that we are also called by the spirit of the times to move and to act in a nobler sphere than we have hitherto been permitted to occupy by the usages of society ; for while it has greeted with its approval and co-operation the exertions used for the moral elevation of the working classes, it has failed to recognize in an equal degree the important and influential position, which we hold in regard to this elevation as being the wives of working men and the mothers of their children ; and amongst all its appliances for that ennobling purpose it has neglected to enlist in the cause of progress the powerful elements of moral strength which will be found to exist in an equal degree with man in every well-regulated female mind, wherever a just and generous encouragement has been given to its development.” And then, without a spark of class envy in her soul, this wonderful woman continues : “ We must confess that we have fallen

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immeasurably short of the standard attained by the females of the upper and middle classes, who by a zealous improvement of their mental resources—by reading, thinking, and composing—have strengthened and embellished their minds while they have adorned and enriched the literature of their country.”

The number of well-educated women available for philanthropic educational work in the mid-Victorian period was probably greater than the number available for paid teaching, which still involved social descent. Charlotte M. Yonge (1823-1901) had created a type in “Ethel May,” beloved and imitated by thousands of young women in town and country who took classes for boys or girls and promoted intelligent Church district work. But for a long time to come the notion that a paid woman worker could not be inspired by such noble motives as an unpaid volunteer left the control of such educational work in the hands of the women of the richer classes, themselves uncontrolled, unless by the Church of England clergy.

The greatest event in the history of the century was the passing of the Act of 1870 making the provision of efficient elementary education for boys and girls compulsory on local authorities in England and Wales, strengthened by the Act of 1876 making it compulsory for parents to cause

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their children to receive it. Scotland was ahead of England, and was able to apply compulsion to parents in 1872.

By the Act of 1870 women were eligible for election on School Boards and a few were at once elected, notably Elizabeth Garrett, who in the same year took her M.D. at Paris and headed the poll at Marylebone for the London School Board.

It must have been a strenuous year, for from this time forward what we have described as a movement becomes rather a prolonged "siege warfare" against the entrenched forces of the Opposition. The leaders in affairs educational had persuaded the Schools Inquiry Commission (1864-68) of the desirability of better education for girls, and by the Endowed Schools Act, 1869, the benefits of endowments for secondary education were to be extended to girls. Women were asking for admission to medical degrees, and the request had provoked the bitterest opposition at Edinburgh. Hitherto the mission field had been the homes of the upper classes, and progress could be made quietly by the conversion of individuals. The greater happiness and power of service conferred on daughters by the enjoyment of intellectual pursuits had been the main end in view. But as women showed a determination to advance to university standards and a desire to be tested by

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the same tests as men ; as education was made accessible to girls in the professional and middle classes who aimed at being self-supporting, two new forces came into action—the sex antagonism which resented the idea that women might prefer a profession to marriage ; and the economic antagonism against a new competitor.

Girton College was founded in 1869. In 1870 Miss Buss converted her school (begun in 1850) into the first public day school for girls. Newnham College was founded in 1871. The Girls' Public Day Schools Company was formed in 1872. The London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women was founded in 1874. In 1878 the University of London opened to women all its degrees, including those of medicine. Somerville College and Lady Margaret Hall were founded in 1879.

In 1881 Mrs. M. G. Grey writes : " There is now no such thing as a ' Woman's Education Question ' apart from that of education generally ; and the real question which has still to be fought for many a long year, I fear, is one as old as education itself ; how is the child of either sex to be trained to the measure of the stature of the perfect human being." In 1889, in her " Last Words to Girls on Life in School and after School," addressed to the pupils of the large group of public day schools which owed its existence in a



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great degree to her, Mrs. Grey (1816-1906) discusses the alleged conflict between the development of a woman's full powers and the performance of her duties as the centre of home-life. "No general rule can be laid down except this : that the interests of home must be considered first." She reminds her readers that the great majority of girls are sent to work with a total disregard of the effect of their work on their minds or bodies and without any mental training which would enable them to be wise wives and mothers.

Speaking especially to the high-school girl, Mrs. Grey continues : " The life of the single woman is the life it is wisest for a girl to contemplate and prepare for. . . . All the preparations made for an active, honourably independent, and useful single life will be equally valuable for married life, should marriage come after all. Single life being less natural, and the single woman being by a mixture of true and false feeling placed lower in social esteem than the married woman, she has in a much greater degree to make her own happiness, to cultivate the robust habits of mind and tone of character which will enable her to make her own place and to win for herself personally the respect given to the married woman's position."

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The movement for intellectual training has been undoubtedly a woman's movement, although naturally making its way most rapidly and easily when men have given their sympathy and encouragement. Beginning in the upper classes it has been reinforced from every class. It has everywhere tended to draw women together and to break down class barriers. The sense of justice (distinct from that of injustice) is intellectual in its origin and growth, for it requires the subordination of particular accidents to general law. Justice for women has been the inspiring motive of most of the educational pioneers. Greater happiness for humanity has been the certain end in view of all.

It is too soon to prophesy as to the results of mental training when it has been extended to girls of every class. In 1911 in England and Wales 11 per cent. of girls aged thirteen, 39 per cent. of those aged fourteen, 58 per cent. of those aged fifteen, and 67 per cent of those aged sixteen, were already employed in gainful occupations, and the long hours that they are permitted to work demand recreation in their short leisure hours. But throughout the whole movement the instinct for association amongst women and their powers of co-operation for a common end have been most marked. Women of all classes of society and of all races are bound together by the common

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experience of maternity, a deeper and more enduring and more unselfish experience than any uniting men. We may be sure that when women combine on this common basis their action will be for the preservation and welfare of humanity.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### *THE ECONOMIC EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN.*

CLARA E. COLLET.

AT the beginning of the nineteenth century nearly three-fourths of the population of England and Wales lived "in villages and detached dwellings of the country." Only about two and a half million persons lived in urban districts. At the end of the century the position was reversed and there were twenty-five million persons in urban districts. •

During the first forty or fifty years of the century the position and occupations of women seem to have changed very little except in the neighbourhood of cotton spinning mills and weaving sheds and to a less extent in other textile trade centres. The hand loom was still in use for silk and ribbon and cloth weaving, and was often worked in cottage homes by men, assisted by their wives and children.

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The wives of the farmers in those days had heavy claims upon them, although it is to be hoped they were lighter than those expounded in 1523 in the Book of Husbandry by Fitzherbert. "It is a wife's occupation," he says, "to winnow all manner of corns, to make malt, to wash and wring, to make hay, shear corn, and, in time of need, to help her husband to fill the muck wain or dung cart, drive the plough, to load hay, corn and such other ; and to go or ride to the market to sell butter, cheese, milk, eggs, chickens, capons, hens, pigs, geese and all manner of corns." Still even the idyllic picture of the Poyzers' farm in "Adam Bede" suggests that, when in good health, Mrs. Poyser must have fallen little short of these demands, and in addition she was the careful mother of a family. The custom which survives in the North of England to this day of boarding and lodging the unmarried men farm servants in the farm, made it impossible for the farmer's wife to superintend her children's education and frequently undesirable that they should remain at home, and both boys and girls had to be sent to boarding schools. Afterwards if the daughters did not help in the farm they would generally be sent to some country town to learn dressmaking or to serve in a shop, paying a premium but receiving board and lodging, or if they preferred it they easily obtained good situations in domestic service. Inn service

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in these pre-railway days had its attractions for them. The better educated girls often became governesses in schools or families.

Their economic position was in every way superior to that of the widows or daughters of the poorer clergy or professional men, who generally had only three alternatives before them—to be resident governesses, or useful companions, or to obtain fine needlework to do at home. The needleworker, unless highly efficient, was wretchedly paid, for obvious reasons. She worked for women whose pride it was to spend their money economically, and who frequently could do the work as well themselves. Except for the spirit of revolt, which was rising among penniless educated women, there was probably little change in their circumstances compared with the previous century. The tragedy of Hetty Wesley was probably still only exceptional by virtue of her genius and spiritual victory. Charlotte Brontë, in "Shirley," points to moral wreckage as a probable result of the cramped lives of the women of her class.\*

The wages of the married agricultural labourers, even when permanently employed and living in cottages on the farm, were too small to support a

\* "Hetty Wesley," by A. T. Quiller Couch (Arrowsmith) and "The English Woman," by David Staars, translated by Mrs. Brownlow (Smith, Elder & Co.), throw much light on the position and attitude of women in the upper classes as affected by economic causes.

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wife and family until the children were really fit for work ; both wives and young children sought casual employment in the fields or other farm service ; hand spinning was no longer offered them by manufacturers.

The demand for factory operatives was to a considerable extent supplied from the children of agricultural labourers engaged by the day or week and living in villages some distance from the farms on which they worked. Another source of supply caused great bitterness amongst the handloom weavers. Under the domestic system the family co-operated in manufacture while the father received the payment at piece rates from the warehouse which gave out the yarn to be woven.\* Under the factory system, long before power was applied to weaving, it was very easy for boys and girls to obtain employment receiving their wages direct from the employer. Labourers and artisans who had been unable to make their children useful at home were tempted under the new system to regard them as sources of profit ; but parents who had hitherto profited by their children's services at home found them as they grew older passing from their control. The wife's wages, even if earned at the factory, belonged to the husband, but the elder boys and girls became economically independent.

\* See note at end of chapter.



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In no county in England is there more family co-operation at the present time than in Lancashire, or a greater willingness on the part of adult sons and daughters to hand over their earnings to the mother's keeping. But this was the district in which parents were first deprived of the power of the purse over their children.

This was not the only economic change wrought by slow degrees as factories sprang up in different parts of the country. Hitherto young women, whether employed at home or abroad, had been entirely under the personal control of their employers. From their parents they received no fixed wages. If they were employed away from home as shop-assistants or dressmakers or domestic servants, they received board and lodging and a small money wage called pocket-money. Higher up in the social scale, where wives and daughters were not allowed to earn money but were expected to save it, even pocket-money was not easily obtainable in many cases. As a result the value of a shilling in cash was enormously higher in the mind of a woman than in that of a man. Pocket-money meant her one opportunity of satisfying her personal desires as distinct from the standard of living laid down for her by others.

It should also be noted that in pre-factory days family life for working girls meant life in other people's families, a very different thing indeed

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from home-life. It was to this aspect of the conditions and dangers of a working girl's life that Mrs. Gaskell called attention in her novel "Ruth" in 1853.

So far we have been watching great changes in women's lives produced by circumstances, not only without the aid of any voluntary movement in their direction, but in spite of the fiercest opposition to the introduction of machinery. And this slow, almost secret, but widespread, economic emancipation of women began at the bottom of the social scale.

The immediate moral results were denounced by every one who came in contact with them. Under the living-in system and in pre-railway days industrial workers came very little under the public eye. If parents and employers abused their powers the fact could not be easily detected. It was possible to idealize the conditions of girls only seen in their best clothes and on high days and holidays. The results on the factory girl going backwards and forwards between her home and her work were more obvious.

In 1841 the disgraceful conditions under which women and girls were employed in mines was discovered, almost by accident, and in the following year the first Mines Act excluded them from underground employment.

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In 1843 Tom Hood's "Song of the Shirt" startled the conscience of all thinking people, and from this time forward we find the masculine ideal of graceful and leisured womanhood, hitherto confined to the upper classes, gradually extended to the woman worker, to the "woman clad in unwomanly rags." During the next thirty years the influence on working men of this upper-class abstraction deserves special study. The reaction caused by the contentment of the orthodox upper classes with the theory of a future life as a compensation for the ills endured in this one by the working classes had given rise to secularism amongst working men and an inclination to accept the teachings of Comte as the religion of humanity.\*

\* The Sequel to "Ministering Children" ("Ministering Children," published in 1854), published in 1867, affords numerous instances of the placid acceptance of the worst physical conditions due to municipal and human neglect, together with grateful recognition of the goodness of Providence in granting some temporary alleviation. This book had an enormous circulation.

"The workman may be ignorant of science and the arts, and the sum of his exact knowledge may be only that which he has gained in his closely circumscribed daily toil; but he is not blind, and his thoughts do not take the shape of daily and hourly thanksgiving that his condition is not worse than it is; he does not imitate the example of the pious shepherd of Salisbury Plain, who derived supreme contentment from the fact that a kind Providence had vouchsafed him salt to eat with his potatoes."—(Robert Knight in the Boilermakers' Annual Report for 1886, quoted from Webb's "History of Trade Unionism," p. 364).

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Whatever criticisms may be justly passed on the position assigned to women in the Positivist philosophy, it was a great advance on that assigned to them by working men in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The movement for the protection of women by factory regulation was not a woman's movement. The results of the Factory and Workshop Acts have been generally so beneficial that no one now cares to ask whether they might not have been even more effective if adolescents had received greater protection and adult women less, instead of being treated alike. In 1848 the actual working hours of women and young persons in textile factories were restricted to ten a day and later on to  $56\frac{1}{2}$  a week. By slow degrees, as inquiry after inquiry showed overwork in every woman's trade, the non-textile factories and workshops were placed under regulation, sixty hours a week and overtime being permitted for both women and girls in non-textile trades under the consolidated Factory and Workshop Act of 1878. It was not until 1895 that overtime was prohibited for girls under eighteen years of age; little girls of fourteen in these non-textile trades are still permitted to work five hours without a break and ten and a half hours a day exclusive of mealtimes.

Until about 1870 there is little sign of any

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effective desire amongst working women to direct their own lives according to an ideal of their own, or even to form such an ideal. But their home lives had slowly been reorganized and the more intelligent had watched the efforts of their husbands and fathers to reconstruct the world they lived in. Several circumstances now combined to give women hope that they themselves might have a share in raising the position of their sex. The Trade Union Commission had made its report in 1869, and the evidence laid before them had converted many persons to the view that the principles involved in trade unionism were economically and morally justifiable. Still more important, the long discussion of the working of these societies had spread the knowledge of them throughout the country, inspiring even the agricultural labourers (under Joseph Arch's guidance) to unite successfully for an increase in wages. Most important of all, John Stuart Mill had published his "Subjection of Women," and had thus created in woman not only a new ideal but a new faith in themselves. The compulsory education of girls, of course, could show little result for some years to come, but the necessity of finding teachers and of making them fit to teach produced immediate effects both educational and economic, to which reference will be made later. A Married Women's Property Act gave married women control over their own earnings.

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The first impulse was to imitate the methods adopted by working men. Trade Unionism, Co-operation, and Political Enfranchisement were the movements which then seemed most hopeful.

In 1874 Mrs. Paterson, daughter of a schoolmaster and wife of a cabinetmaker, who had before her marriage been assistant secretary to the Working Men's Club and Institute Union and afterwards secretary to a Suffrage Society, formed a trade union among the women in the bookbinding trades. In the following year she secured the co-operation of several educated men and women in the formation of the Women's Protective and Provident League (now the Women's Trade Union League) for the promotion of trade unions among women. Until Mrs. Paterson's death in 1886 the struggle with prejudices as to women's sphere and capacities seems to have occupied the minds of the League members much more than questions as to wages. Their delegates at the Trade Union Congress unsuccessfully opposed the restriction of the hours of employment of women, and on the passing of the Factory and Workshop Act in 1878 quite logically desired that women should be appointed as inspectors. Year after year, from 1878 till 1893, when women were appointed, they moved and carried an amendment to add "and women" to the Congress resolution

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in favour of the appointment of working men as inspectors ; and year after year the parliamentary committee re-introduced the resolution without including women. The secretary of the committee, Mr. Broadhurst, said the lady delegates were obstinate.

How far has Trade Unionism amongst women been successful ? It is customary to say that it has been a success in the cotton trade where the women belong to mixed unions, and where many women continue work after marriage, and only very partially successful in the non-textile trades.

In 1910, out of 221,000 female members of trade unions, 151,000 were cotton operatives, 32,000 were other textile operatives, and 38,000 were non-textile workers. Great increases in numbers in each of the three groups have taken place since then, largely as a consequence of the National Insurance Act.

When, however, we examine the results in order to discover the influence of women in the movement, the answer is more doubtful. In 1914 there were 212,000 female members of cotton operatives' unions, and they were in an overwhelming majority in the unions to which they belonged. But at the Trade Union Congress in 1913 the Card and Blowing Room Operatives' Associations (of whom more than four-fifths are women) were represented by eighteen men delegates and no women ; the Cotton



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Weavers' and Winders' Associations (of whom more than two-thirds are women) were represented by forty-five men and no women. The other textile trades sent no women delegates.

We must infer from this that in the mixed unions trade unionism makes no claim on women other than the payment of their subscriptions, in return for which they have the satisfaction of knowing that rates of pay are maintained and that in the event of a strike or breakdown of machinery they will receive weekly benefit.

The women's unions managed by themselves in the non-textile trades present entirely different features. It would be as easy to compare the success of an artist's workshop with that of a large factory producing stereotyped copies of an artist's work. Innumerable little societies have come into being and died out, but every one of them has probably changed the mental atmosphere of its members and given them a new outlook upon life. Politically their federation, under the auspices of the Women's Trade Union League, has provided a sociological laboratory and an easy approach to women workers in different trades. They afford a kind of alarm bell by which the nation can be promptly called to attention when any grievance is discovered.

"Women's Unions are especially valuable as accentuating the social position of women and in

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drawing the attention of the cultured rich—an indispensable force in social reform—to their present condition." This view, put forward by a member of the League in 1880, was an accurate forecast of its history. The kindred leagues and industrial councils in London, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, and elsewhere, including men and women of all classes, are fulfilling a similar purpose of discovering the duty of the richer consumers towards women producers.

It is in the Co-operative Movement, however, that women of the working classes have had opportunities of using their highest powers, and have found marriage a help instead of a hindrance in their efforts towards the liberation of women.

Married women were the last to obtain economic freedom ; it was granted to wives in the working classes twelve years before it was accorded to wives in the propertied classes. But the power to hold their own earnings has not been accompanied by an increased tendency for wives to be wage-earners. Comparing 1901 with 1851 we find a marked diminution in the proportion of wives and widows employed in gainful occupations, although during the same period their opportunities for being industrially useful at home have greatly diminished. With the decay of the small industries, whether shopkeeping or workshop production,

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men have been obliged to leave their homes to earn wages, and can no longer employ their wives as assistants. Wives of working men now have leisure to an extent formerly unknown among them, and they now have sufficient education to enable them to use it to advantage.

As consumers purchasing goods from the co-operative stores women were attracted into acquaintance with the ideals of co-operators, and as customers they found themselves exercising a control on the management. There was, however, a great danger that the whole movement would end in nothing more than a purely business organization for dividing profits among consumers, when, in 1883, a "Woman's Corner," under the editorship of Mrs. Arthur Acland, was instituted in the "*Co-operative News*." A letter from Mrs. Mary Lawrenson, a member of the Woolwich Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society, started a correspondence which resulted in the formation of a women's Co-operative League in 1883 which, in the following year, became the "Women's Co-operative Guild." Mrs. Lawrenson, the daughter of a trade union printer and co-operator, and herself a teacher before her marriage, was general secretary from 1885 to 1889, and on her resignation was succeeded by a Girton student with an inherited interest in co-operation and the raising of the position of women. In 1892 the

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Guild included 100 branches with 4,000 members. In 1914 it had 600 branches and 32,000 members, and sent 864 women delegates to its annual congress.

In its early years the influence of a half-dozen or so remarkably endowed women was very great. The Guild might have been easily swayed by the persuasive oratory of their leaders, if those leaders had not made it their first object to counteract such a danger and to curtail their own power. Every effort was directed towards training the members to be self-governing and to think for themselves. During the last ten years or so the members have become increasingly aware that as co-operators they are members of a democratic commonwealth, and need not wait for legislation from outside before putting into operation their own reforming laws. The women recognize that as mothers they should influence the education of sons as well as of daughters ; as wives they are entitled to criticize and amend the man-made marriage laws ; as rational employers they are bound to pay not merely a living wage but an efficiency wage ; as consumers they must guard against adulteration and unfair prices. For the most part they are married women, wives of workmen and themselves working women before marriage, and they have become conscious that they have better opportunities than their husbands of taking an all-round

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view of labour questions, their experience being wider and less specialized.

Thanks to the efforts of the Women's Guild, the Wholesale Co-operative Societies of Great Britain are now paying in every store and workshop under their control not less than the minimum wage scale laid down by the Guild for women and girls, a scale considerably higher than the average wage paid for longer hours in non-co-operative firms.

Political enfranchisement has not yet been attained. The women whose counsels influence legislators are still irresponsible to the women whose lives are affected by them. In the meantime laws likely to have a far-reaching influence have recently come into operation. The Trade Boards Act, 1909, was the result of a general conviction that women workers would never be able to secure a living wage by trade union methods, and that it was the interest of the state that a living wage should be secured to them. It was a tentative measure, and therefore adapted to the circumstances of the moment rather than logical in its construction. There is, for example, no reason at all why a minimum should only be enforced in trades with a branch in which exceptionally low rates prevail ; to pay exceptionally low rates in a trade in which the majority of employers pay good rates is even more reprehensible.

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The indirect effects of the National Insurance Act will probably have the most important influence on the industrial position of women in every class. Women care much more about the kind of work they do than about the payment they receive. But the work for which women are most fitted has been either unpaid, badly paid, or left undone. The Education Act of 1870 was the first measure which made it compulsory on the state to train, employ, and therefore pay enough to secure, a large number of efficient women to undertake eminently womanly work. The teaching profession is now on a firmer basis than any other occupation for women. Similarly we may expect that the experience under the Insurance Act will force the state to take measures for the maintenance of the health of children and the early treatment of disease. The daily increasing battle against the enemies of health is one to which most women seem able to devote unflagging energy, and when once their employment in this direction becomes obligatory on health authorities, it will be discovered that there is no such thing as a superfluous woman. The demand for paid women workers to do women's work, at present left undone, may fairly be relied upon to put an end to the competition of women with men in neutral labour markets, on unequal terms.



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NOTE (see page 96).

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS  
ON THE CONDITION OF THE HAND-LOOM WEAVERS  
1841 (pp. 38, 39).

"The weaver," says Mr. Muggeridge, "will stand by his loom while it will enable him to exist, however miserably; and many, induced temporarily to quit it, have returned to it again, when work was to be had. A variety of causes tend, I think satisfactorily, to account for, if not extenuate, the pertinacity with which an employment is clung to, yielding, as has been shown, such scanty and inadequate remuneration.

"1st.—It gratifies that innate love of independence which all more or less feel, by leaving the workman entirely the master of his own time, and the sole guide of his actions. He can play or idle, as feeling or inclination leads him; rise early or late; apply himself assiduously, or carelessly, as he pleases; and work up at any time, by increased exertion, hours previously sacrificed to indulgence or recreation. Beyond the necessity imposed upon him of yielding a given quantity of labour to produce a given amount of earnings, he has little, if any, control. In the proportion he is willing to sacrifice the one, he can dispense with the other, and idleness carries with it no punishment, beyond the restrictions of enjoyment which arise from its being unremunerated. There is scarcely another condition of any portion of our working population thus free from external control. The factory operative is not only mulct his wages for absence, but, if of frequent occurrence, discharged altogether from his employment. The bricklayer, the carpenter, the painter, the joiner, the stonemason, the outdoor labourer, have each their appointed daily hours of labour, a disregard of which would lead to the same result. Similar restraint is carried throughout all our commercial and trading establishments. Another cause of the attachment of the weaver to his precarious occupation arises, I am persuaded, in many cases, from better, and more commendable feelings. It concentrates the family under one roof; gives to each



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member of it a common interest ; leaves the children under the watchful eye of the parent ; and, the fate of one being the fate of all, it is borne, be it harsh or otherwise, without repining. '*Home is home* be it ever so homely,' is a trite but an apposite proverb, the truth of which cannot be more practically evinced, than it has been by hundreds of families of hand-loom weavers."

"There is," says Dr. Mitchell, "a considerable portion of lottery, fortune, and chance in the weaver's occupation. This produces a fond delusion on the mind, and multitudes cling to a trade which they would not abandon, even for one more productive than their own, which had not this attraction.

"Too great attachment to the occupation is the bane of the trade. The cause just last mentioned would of itself retain many, even against their better judgment ; but there are other attractions. There is a sort of independence about the work. A weaver is not tied to hours like the carpenter, bricklayer, and most artizans. He may begin his work when he pleases. He is not confined within the walls like men in a spinning factory. He may go out when he thinks fit. He may work to 10 and 11 o'clock or later, to make up for lost time. The weaver also enjoys the society of his family. He feels strongly the domestic attachments, even beyond what cool reason would approve. Hence he will not find any other employment for his children, and easily believes that he cannot.

"From all these causes it is, that many are drawn into the trade, and afterwards bring up their children to it, and cling to the trade under every disadvantage. There is at the best of times a full supply of hands, equal to the work, and at other times a great superabundance. At the best of times the weaver can never be very highly paid, and at other times, even if the same price be paid for the work done, the work to be done is so little in comparison of the number willing and anxious to do it, that the wages distributed amongst so many, make but a very poor and wretched income, and from which a comfortable existence cannot be supported."

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## CHAPTER V.

### *THE MORAL REVOLUTION.*

DR. HELEN WILSON.

"I believe that a time is coming when it will be apparent that the principle for which we are contending—the unity of the moral law and the equality of all human souls before God—is the most fruitful and powerful revolutionizing principle which the world has ever known."

—JOSEPHINE BUTLER.

THE woman's movement can only be seen in its true light when we recognize it as "part of the great movement that has been going on all through the ages to free the world from the dominion of brute force and bring about the rule of the spirit."\*

Of that greater movement one of the most vital parts has been a gradual development in the ideal of sexual relationships. This development has run side by side with the movement for the emancipation of women, sometimes intertwined, sometimes apparently separate, but always tending in the same direction.

\* Mrs. Creighton. "The Social Disease, and how to fight it" (p. 17).

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1. It has become increasingly clear that "monogamy belongs to the permanent content of all higher social civilization, and that true social progress will tighten the bond of marriage rather than loosen it."\* This conclusion is reached partly because every child needs, and is entitled to, the care and protection of both father and mother, and partly on account of the social and educational value of the institution of marriage. Dimly recognized in heathen civilizations, the full significance of the monogamous ideal has become apparent in Christianity. "The great enrichment and deepening of sexual love which has taken place since the time of the Ancient World, is a result of the self-forgetful love, the immense spiritual elevation above the sensuous sphere, and the passionate inner life which have sprung from the world of religious feeling and raised the sexual impulses from the poverty of the merely sensuous level to the height and richness of spiritual life."†

Almost from the dawn of civilization, another sex relationship of very different character has flourished, more or less openly, alongside of marriage; at many epochs it has been accepted as an almost equally necessary institution. We refer to prostitution, *i.e.* the recognition of a class of women who hire themselves for gain to all

\* Foerster. "Marriage and the Sex Problem" (p. 50).

† Foerster, *ibid.*

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comers. The existence of this class implies the existence of a larger class of men who resort to these women for the satisfaction of their sexual desires. The women have nearly always been regarded with contempt and treated as outcasts ; while tolerance, or, at any rate, much milder disapproval has been meted out to the men who made use of them. The chief excuse for such an attitude has been the belief, once widely held but now discredited, that the majority of men could not live a chaste life without injury to their health. This physiological error, combined with the tendencies to egotism and tyranny which have so long held sway, has led to the existence of the double moral standard : chastity and monogamy have been recognized as binding on women, while at most epochs a much lower standard has been imposed on men. The Christian Church has always protested against this view, though in practice its protest has been feeble, and in some centuries altogether silent. In the Middle Ages the Church felt that the only way to secure chastity, devotion and learning was to teach men and women to flee the world.

Little reflection is necessary to show how disastrous has been the working of this double standard, and how lowering it is to men as well as women. It proclaims men to be the helpless slaves of their appetites ; it necessitates the degradation

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of a certain section of women. While maintaining that unchastity (in a woman) is the crime of crimes, it yet dooms some women to a life that is made up of this crime—a sacrifice to the “necessities” of the ruling section of humanity. The women so degraded are a class apart, separated by an impassable gulf from the rest of the community, and having no claim to the ordinary rights of citizens. Such a view is manifestly incompatible with faith in a God of justice and purity. Conscious of this, yet taught to believe prostitution inevitable, devout men and women have relegated the whole question to silence. But this could not last when women began to think, when society began to realize the meaning of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Then we knew that there could be no outcast women, that no one human being was of less value than another ; then we recognized the infinite degradation that it meant to men to accept as inevitable the existence of the prostitute.

This fundamental position is so important that it is worth while, even at the risk of repetition, to quote Mrs. Creighton's statement of it :

“Pure women can no longer be content to owe their purity, their sheltered homes, to the degradation of other women. The existence of the prostitute was considered necessary to make the pure home possible. Women as well as men have accepted

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her existence as a necessity. They were ashamed, afraid to know about her, but they felt that it was all right so long as they did not know, and good men as well as bad men were eager to keep women from this knowledge. It has been said with justice that if it is true that the prostitute must exist in order to preserve the purity of other women, then she should be given a highly honoured place as one who sacrifices herself for the good of society. But good women ignored her, they refused to face the fact of her existence, they did not understand what it involved. Now we know, and we know that this thing cannot go on, that no social system can be healthy that rests on the degradation of some of its members. Prostitution cannot be a necessity because we cannot believe that men are unable to learn and to practise self-control. If women are condemned to degradation because of the unchastity of men, the same sin condemns men to degradation. Women must struggle not only for the purity of women but the purity of men, and in this struggle, they have not got to fight against men, but win more men to fight with them.”\*

2. In order to describe the “Moral Revolution” of the last half-century, it is necessary to explain as briefly as possible, the system which roused the

\* Creighton, *ibid.*, pp. 33-35.

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great protest. There are certain diseases, known as venereal, which are spread by prostitution. The Napoleonic wars, like all wars, were accompanied and followed by a great increase of these diseases. In order to check them, Napoleon I. devised the plan which is known as *Réglementation*, Regulation or *police des mœurs*; it was speedily adopted in most continental countries and still exists in some of them. Its essence is to register all women living by prostitution, and to examine them medically at regular intervals; those who are found diseased are placed in hospital, and kept there till cured. Under this system, the men who suffer from the diseases (and by whom they are frequently carried to the innocent) are not touched. The tyranny and injustice of this plan, as well as its practical encouragement of vice, are obvious. As to its hygienic efficacy, it is sufficient to say that it is now universally admitted to be useless, and worse than useless, for checking disease.

A similar system under the name of the Contagious Diseases Acts was gradually introduced in England between the years 1865 and 1869. At first it aroused little interest, though a few doctors and rescue workers tried to protest. In the autumn of 1869 some of these, recognizing that it was above all a question for women, appealed for aid to Mrs. Josephine Butler of Liverpool. Beautiful, gifted,



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cultured, married to a husband whose courage and insight were equal to her own, she was singularly fitted to be the leader of a great cause. "She had been brought up in the atmosphere of the agitation against slavery, and had drunk deep of the spirit of freedom in the prolonged agony of the struggle for parliamentary reform. She had already taken a distinguished part in advancing the education of women" (and was a supporter of their enfranchisement). "But in her work against the C.D. Acts, she found the task of her life."\* That task she courageously accepted after a period of hesitation, struggle and prayer. She became the leader of a movement which stirred Great Britain from end to end, and kindled a flame which still burns all over Europe.

The movement has been described as "the revolt of a sex," but it was much more. Mrs. Butler says: "The legislation we opposed secured the enslavement of women and the increased immorality of men, and history and experience alike teach us that these two results are never separated. . . . It was as a citizen of a free country first, and as a woman secondly, that I felt impelled to come for-

\* Lyon Blease. "The Enfranchisement of English-women." The chapter on "Practical Egoism" gives a good, concise account of the struggle. Those who wish for a fuller account of this remarkable woman are referred to "Josephine E. Butler: An Autobiographical Memoir," by G. W. and L. A. Johnson. Pub. Arrowsmith.

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ward in defence of the right.”\* Men as well as women gathered round the standard which she raised. Among so many heroic names it is hard to choose, but we may mention Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, who had opened the medical profession to women; the Right Hon. Sir J. Stansfeld, one of the founders of the London School of Medicine for Women; Professor (afterwards Right Hon.) James Stuart, founder of the University Extension Movement, and a pioneer in Women's Education at Cambridge. For ten years these two men made the “Repeal” work (*i.e.* the agitation for repeal of the C.D. Acts), their main business in life. Stansfeld sacrificed a place in the Cabinet for its sake, and Stuart risked the forfeiture of a brilliant University career.

Success attended the efforts of the devoted band. After sixteen years of constant and arduous toil, in the course of which it had to face not only unpopularity, obloquy, and contempt, but bodily peril from infuriated mobs, the Contagious Diseases Acts were suspended in 1883 and repealed in 1886. (Unhappily a system less definite but similar in its effects is still in force in India in spite of repeated protests.)

The movement spread beyond the British Isles, largely owing to the personal exertions of Mrs.

\* Josephine Butler. “Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade.”

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Butler. In 1877 an International Congress was held in Geneva. In 1877 the International Abolitionist Federation was formed; it is still active and has branches all over the world. Among its distinguished adherents have been such men as Mazzini, Garibaldi, de Laveleye, Victor Hugo, and Lloyd Garrison. As a consequence of its labours and of the gradual enlightenment of public opinion, the Regulation system has been abolished in Norway, Denmark, Holland and Italy, as well as England, while it has been condemned by Government Commissions in France and Sweden.

This movement, besides its immediate practical result, which was necessarily of a somewhat limited range, has had an extraordinarily fruitful effect in many other ways.

“It struck point-blank at the head of a lie.”

The system it attacks has been described as “the central crime of the universe,” and by giving battle to it, men and women have been roused to face evils which had too long festered in darkness.

3. The Abolitionist movement has had far-reaching effects, for the moral awakening of the last twenty or thirty years may be chiefly traced to it. Some of the signs of this awakening must now be mentioned.

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The Criminal Law Amendment Act, passed in 1885, has been called the charter of English girlhood. It raised the age at which a girl could consent to her own dishonour from thirteen to sixteen years. (Many think that it should now be raised to eighteen.) It also gave new powers for preventing or punishing procurers and all persons who make a profit from the vice of others. The passage of the Act was owing to the chivalrous efforts of Mr. W. T. Stead, who courageously uncovered the evils that made it a necessity. He suffered imprisonment for one slight indiscretion in doing this work ; but his revelations roused the country to demand the passage of the Bill, which had been ready for some years, but had failed to secure the attention of Parliament.

When the Act was passed, its promoters, recognizing that the mere passing of a law can do little unless it is enforced, founded the National Vigilance Association, which has ever since done a most valuable work in stimulating and guiding the public and the authorities to use all the powers of the law for the protection of girls.

In the course of this work, the secretary of the National Vigilance Association (Mr. W. A. Coote) frequently had his attention drawn to the existence of an organized traffic in women : English girls were taken abroad and foreign girls brought to England for immoral purposes. Since 1899 he has

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succeeded in organizing an international movement against this international evil. The crime is nothing new. Such a traffic has existed since classical times, and between many nations. The new and encouraging feature is that it is being attacked ; that kings and statesmen give their names and active support to the efforts against it ; and that international agreements have been drawn up to facilitate united work by the police of different countries.

In the last few years, thanks largely to the growing interest in Public Health, the attention of responsible authorities has been directed to those diseases which the Contagious Diseases Acts tried by mistaken methods to diminish. These diseases are mainly spread by prostitution ; they may be, and often are, carried to the innocent and virtuous, and may be conveyed to unborn children. They have consequences disastrous to health and sometimes to life. Hitherto, they have been largely hidden by the veil of secrecy which has covered the whole subject, but now it is recognized that a policy of silence and secrecy will neither cure nor prevent them. The two great means chiefly advocated are (1) a wider knowledge of their dangers, and (2) early and efficient treatment, so that the sufferers may be rendered non-contagious as soon as possible. But these things do not go to

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the root of the matter. These diseases, like others, can only be eradicated by remedying the conditions which favour their spread, *i.e.*, in this case, by getting rid of prostitution.

Attempts are now being made in England and the United States to study scientifically the causes which lead women into a career so contrary to all the normal instincts of womanhood. The inquiry is not a simple one. Even in a single case, it is rarely possible to trace a girl's fall to a single cause, but rather to several influences acting on a nature unfortified by good training, or naturally weak. The factors at work usually come under two or more of the following heads :—

Defects in the individual (including immaturity.

Most are very young when they begin to go wrong).

Defects of education—general or special.

Defects in conditions of house and home. (A girl who has two good parents rarely goes wrong.)

Defects in industrial conditions. (Low wages, unemployment, bad conditions of work.)

Defects of recreation. (No good influences for leisure time, and no place but the street.)

It should be noted that all of these—except, possibly, the industrial conditions—act almost as disastrously on lads as on girls, and that they tend

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to produce not only the prostitute but also her customer.

For more than a century, philanthropy has sought to do something for the women or girls who have begun to go astray, and who are willing to return to a more normal life. There are many Homes and Refuges—most of them under religious bodies—but they are hampered by the difficulty of raising funds, and also by lack of trained and competent workers. In some of the American institutions for delinquent women and girls, it has been found well worth while to pay salaries equal to those given for other kinds of professional work. Perhaps, in future, University and College women may be more largely enlisted in this most Christ-like work, which should give scope for educational, administrative and spiritual powers of the highest order.

Of all the movements, perhaps the most far-reaching is that for what is called Moral Education. "It is a mistake to leave children and young people in ignorance of the functions of the body and the laws of reproduction; for ignorance arouses curiosity, and curiosity leads to much more unwholesome thought on these matters than simple information wisely and frankly given could possibly occasion. Probably, when the right time comes,



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the wisest plan is to give instruction on the bodily functions, and on the danger of disease, not isolated from other teaching, but as a part of general instruction in botany and natural science, and in hygiene and the general care of the body. This is a subject to which parents and educationalists are beginning to give serious attention." \* But Moral Education includes very much more than the giving of physiological information ; it means instilling the principles of self-control, purity, justice, truth and love. These should be taught daily, and the best method of teaching is by demonstrating the principle in action, applying it to the facts and problems of daily life. The grand mistake has been in attempting to withdraw from the child's consciousness a whole range of facts and problems, and so missing the opportunity to show the principles at work within that range.

4. The movement, which has been described above, has two aspects. On the one hand, it depends on the recognition by each individual of his or her duty to keep the mind and body " holy unto the Lord." This duty is pre-eminently taught by Christianity, but it is recognized by the best thinkers of all faiths, as supremely necessary to human progress. " The end of all Christian self-

\* Creighton.

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discipline is that we may have the freedom of our whole nature" (Gore).

But the movement, in the present day, owes its special character to the fact that it makes a social, rather than an individual, appeal. It declares that purity and freedom should not be the prerogative of a few, but should be attainable by all. Like the Woman's Movement, it is founded essentially on the concept of the value of the human soul. It is essentially democratic. The touchstone to which it brings every proposal is the idea of justice.

"I think, of all things in this world, there is nothing which is so desirable as justice," wrote Professor Stuart. "It is more difficult to act justly, than to act mercifully or benevolently, and more good is done in the long run by justice than by anything else. I am not speaking in philosophical abstractions, I am speaking what is to me the profound impression made by the experience of my life.

"The poorer and meaner any group of people, the more necessary it is that they should be treated justly. No man and no woman can ever shut themselves out of the pale of justice, however erring, however degraded they may be.

"Nor is it only the person who is unjustly treated who suffers. By the tremendous revenge of Nature the person who acts unjustly suffers too.

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And there is about injustice this horrible characteristic, that when it has been long established people get to regard it as no longer injustice. Even those who suffer from it suffer in a dumb and unintelligent way, often not knowing why they suffer ; and the inflictors of the injustice, forgetting that it is injustice, go on till they become hardened into forgetfulness or even ignorance of what they do."

Justice has been called the eldest daughter of Love. The two speak with one voice in declaring that if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. So long as one woman is trampled under foot, and made an outcast for the supposed benefit of others, all womanhood is degraded. "The human society towards which it is our duty to strive," wrote Josephine Butler, "will have within it no human dregs. For me there is no such thing as a *refuse* of society. The most degraded, the most criminal of men and women are yet our brethren, and of none of them do we dare to say that they are beyond redemption and incapable of a spiritual resurrection."

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## CHAPTER VI.

### *THE INTERNATIONAL ASPECT OF THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT.*

UNA M. SAUNDERS.

SOMETHING approaching an international freemasonry in women's matters has most surely been one outgrowth of the Woman's Movement. The great war may, for a time, intervene, and check ; the mutual help of some nations may be limited ; but so deep are the friendships already formed, and so sure the strength of the bonds that must continue to unite the women working in each nation for the great causes contained within the Woman's Movement, that, ultimately, international peace must be made more possible of re-establishment because of that movement.\*

\* In the Spring of 1915 two International Conferences of Women were held ; an International Socialist Conference in Switzerland, and an International Peace Conference in Holland. Whatever criticisms they may have been open to, and these have been many, these Conferences were at least significant of the strength of international ties among women.—ED.

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British women owe many a debt of gratitude to leaders in Norway and Germany, Finland, and other European countries, for victories already won, or lines of advance indicated. Where would much of our work for the suppression of the White Slave Traffic be, if it were not for the leaders in Switzerland and other Continental countries, who form, for instance, the great body of the "Amies de la Jeune Fille"? To women in the United States of America many societies of women workers in other lands have owed ideas which have borne fruit in united work for municipal and other reforms. Indeed, it was from that republic that the first organized Woman's Movement emanated. American women delegates sent in 1840 to the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London, were excluded from its sittings; thus aroused to a sense of disability, some leading women called together, in 1848, the first "Women's Rights Convention," held in New York State. Even at that early date, they saw the need for active propaganda on behalf of the higher education of women, the vote for women, and married women's property laws. It is almost invidious, however, to mention certain countries and omit others, for the same convictions are most evidently animating the women of all lands where women receive any advanced education.

The Woman's Movement differs greatly in form

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as it makes its appearance in different types of civilization, and as influenced by differing faiths. The lines of its development are affected also by economic and other causes, but, however varied its development may be, the same ideals are found everywhere struggling to birth. The Woman's Movement is an international fact. In unexpected ways the Near and Far East share in the movement. An article in the *Contemporary Review* for June, 1914,\* gives the following as the aim of the Turkish Society for the Defence of the Rights of Women :—

1. To transform the outdoor costume of Turkish women.
2. To ameliorate the rules of marriage according to the exigencies of common sense.
3. To fortify woman in the home.
4. To render mothers capable of bringing up their children according to the principles of modern pedagogy.
5. To initiate Turkish women into life in society.
6. To encourage women to earn their own living by their own work, and to find them work in order to remedy the present evils.

\* "The Feminist Movement in Turkey," by Ellen D. Ellis and Florence Palmer, of the American Girls' College, Constantinople.

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7. To open women's schools in order to give young Turkish girls an education suited to the needs of their country ; and to improve those schools already existing.

The last two points are considered to be in some ways the most important, and "show that Turkish women have grasped the essential nature of their problem, because it remains true<sup>1</sup> in Turkey, as elsewhere, that in women's economic independence and in her intellectual training lies the secret of her social position."

Dr. Alice Salomon, the secretary of the German National Council of Women (*Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine*), in a report on the work of the Woman's Movement throughout the world, writes : "The endeavour to grasp the Woman's Movement in different lands as a whole, never fails to produce a feeling of astonishment that the aims and undertakings of the modern woman, though everywhere spontaneous in their origin, are so fundamentally alike, utterly different as their promoters may be in national temperament, in environment, in occupations, and in religion. The same convictions animate the women of all lands : they strive after the same objects : they are everywhere dominated by the same ideas : they are pushing the same demands." Miss Ruth Rouse writes : "My own experience amongst the women students of forty-two different countries confirms this



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verdict: conversation with leaders of women's organizations, study of their literature, attendance at their conferences, reveal a curious unanimity of idea and ideal. It is no forced and artificial unanimity, for the majority of modern national women's movements have sprung up spontaneously."\*

From East to West, from North to South, the Movement spreads. Already we find at least eight international organizations at work. These are summed up in a recent writing as The International Council of Women, with its more than seven million members in twenty-two different lands (the National Councils of Women of which this is composed are almost invariably very representative of the Woman's Movement): The International Women's Suffrage Alliance; The Travellers' Aid Society; Les Amies de la Jeune Fille, working in thirty-nine countries; Le Secretariat Internationale de l'Action Sociale de la Femme; L'Association Catholique Internationale des Œuvres de Protection de la Jeune Fille; The World's Young Women's Christian Association, with 670,000 members in twenty-three countries; The World's Women's Christian Temperance Union, with auxiliaries in at least fifty countries. The nations whose women are joining these inter-

\* "Foreign Missions and the Women's Movement in the West," by Ruth Rouse, pp. 4, 5.

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national societies are in most varied stages of development ; not only do we find among them those lands where women are educated and have also long since entered the great industrial world, but also countries where, in spite of a so-called civilization, women's position is still mediæval. The great non-Christian lands are beginning to take their place in the line and enter the International Alliance. China was the twenty-seventh nation to form a National Woman Suffrage Association. Those who know China well speak of the last decade as having witnessed there the greatest educational renaissance the world has ever seen. The words, "the emancipation of women," have become one of the watchwords of modern China.\* Education and the ideals of moral freedom have gone forward hand in hand. After some fifty-five years in which under missionary (and therefore foreign) guidance, women's education had battled its way into favour, the prospectus of the first girls' school under purely Chinese management in 1897 contained a clause to the effect that "no girls may be sold as concubines or as slaves, who have been pupils."† A society was launched by a Manchu princess a few years ago to abolish the practice of having

\* "The Education of Women in China," by M. E. Burton, p. 192.

† *Ibid.*, p. 103.

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secondary wives. So China moves with her Western sisters.

In Japan, too, the new life is throbbing. "Women are demanding larger spheres of service in both professional and commercial life, a larger freedom of choice in marriage, more spiritual freedom . . . the right to *think*."\* It is not as yet, however, the question of suffrage towards which the thoughts of Japanese women are turning, for men only have the suffrage in very small numbers, and "it is not they who rule, but His Imperial Majesty." Philanthropic and social work, however, are claiming a place in Japanese women's lives and through that education in service, the Woman's Movement there begins to make its voice heard.

Of the three great Eastern countries, India, however, is that which we might feel would be excluded from countries in the freemasonry of the Woman's Movement. It is true that it is possible even now for an Indian woman lawyer who has intimate knowledge of the life of uppercaste Indian women to say sadly that they are still back in the life of the mediæval centuries, but the very existence of that woman lawyer and her position as legal adviser on women's matters to the Government of Bengal is typical of the advance that is

\* "Does Japan need the Social Message?" by Miss Caroline Macdonald.

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being made. Another Indian woman, the wife of a barrister, stood for election to the Municipal Council in Allahabad, though finally her name was withdrawn. The Begum of Bhopal, a woman ruler of a Mohammedan State, in spite of all Mohammedan prejudice, even presides at public meetings at which men are present. Behind these outstanding women there is an ever-increasing number of those who are steadily opening new avenues for themselves, and taking up the burden of the yet unemancipated masses of their fellow-women.\*

In making some study of the international character of the Woman's Movement, it would be interesting to consider its educational and its economic causes, the wrongs against women which have needed remedial legislation, the opportunities for fuller civic and professional service which have opened before women in each land, the dangers which beset the path for women as they press forward towards the further goal. The likenesses and the differences among the many races affected would give a wide field for study. In the short compass of this chapter the writer can only select a few outstanding facts which may tempt the reader to look further and turn to those who are experts on the subject.

\* See the Maharani of Baroda's book, "The Position of Women in Indian Life."

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*The history of women's education* has been on the whole fairly uniform in character in the Anglo-Saxon countries and in those of Northern Europe. The story of Mary Lyon in the United States and her fight for higher education, the foundation by her of a great women's college, Mount Holyoke, could be paralleled in many lands. The rapidity of the growth of the demand for higher education for women in the United States since then could perhaps scarcely be paralleled except in Russia—for there are some 60,000 women in the American universities and colleges, and (before the war) some 40,000 in those of Russia. In many countries, however, in varying proportion, the advance from merely elementary education, or something supposedly specially adapted to girls, to the highest education possible to any, has been made. In Latin countries girls educated under Roman Catholic auspices have not had so great an opportunity, but last year before the war some six thousand women were studying in French universities.\*

A curious development of education is reported from China, where an English college woman for a time taught in one of the many new "Political Colleges" for both men and women. These schools were started by the great political parties,

\* Further statistics may be obtained from the World's Student Christian Federation Report, 1913.

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and run at fees which could not possibly pay, involving therefore in many cases daily personal superintendence or tuition without any remuneration. There is something rather pathetic about the mistaken idea that one can and should stimulate girls to spend their time studying International, Mercantile and Administrative Law to the exclusion of subjects of far greater importance, in a country where infant mortality is normally fifty per cent. Yet, however mistaken in form or method, the devotion to modern education shown by this is an augury of the place Chinese women will ultimately take in the educational world.

Rumour has it that in India, in a men's theological college where the wives aspired to take the course with their husbands, several passed the examinations higher than the lords of creation, but the results were kept secret. What the few women in India are able to do educationally to-day, a great number will be pressing forward to do in no dim future.

*From education we pass to economic changes.* Scarcely a country remains untouched by the gigantic revolution which has forced women out of home production into factory production. While Great Britain has approximately four and a half million women and girls over fifteen in industry,\*

\* Mrs. F. W. Hubback, on "Women's Wages" in *The New Statesman*, Feb. 21, 1914.

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Germany is reported to have nine million, in each case about a third of its female population. In France the proportion is said to be a good deal higher.\* In the United States of America eight million women and girls over ten years of age were reported in "gainful occupations" in the last census. The evils of sweated trades among women are limited to no one nation, nor the danger of the breaking-up of homes because of women's enforced absence for daily work. Even India shares in the new industrial life, and thousands of women work twelve to fourteen hours a day in the mills of Bombay; the child labour in the jute mills of Calcutta was one of the evils to which attention was drawn by the Maharani of Baroda.†

The factory returns of Japan for 1910 show 477,874 women factory workers, and of these 34,605 girls were under fourteen years of age. The girls work for long hours and are housed in dormitories attached to the factories in many cases. After some seven or eight years of work many are sent home with tuberculosis or other diseases. Some rather meagre factory laws to remedy these things have been passed, but they are only to come into operation some eight years hence.‡

\* Mdle. de Dietrich. "Our Unfolding Purpose," p. 188.

† "The Position of Women in Indian Life," by the Maharani of Baroda.

‡ "Does Japan Need the Social Message?" p. 9.



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Further enumeration of the international phases of educational and economic changes among women, would serve little purpose, so well known are they to most women who think at all to-day. We can therefore pass on to see how far *new possibilities for national service* have been opened to women in many nations, and how these positions of leadership have led women to discover the handicap of their unenfranchised state in most countries. By 1910, Denmark had already had 127 women serving as Town Councillors. From Sweden we hear also of women Councillors, of women as Poor Law Guardians, House Inspectors, Police Matrons. For the latter work, many women have been appointed in Germany and the United States, and a few in Austria, Switzerland, Holland, and Finland. Undoubtedly the lead in giving women responsible municipal positions has come from the English-speaking and the Scandinavian countries. The "Woman Citizen Library" in 1914 summarizes such possibilities in the following way : In eighteen countries or states (fourteen English-speaking, four Scandinavian) women are eligible for election on to Town Councils ; and in thirty-nine states or countries (thirty-two English-speaking, five Scandinavian, and two Asiatic) they have no right to vote for Town Councils. As we think of municipal suffrage, our vision may carry us beyond Europe or America to Burmah and

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India. In the former country, the vote was granted to the women of Rangoon in 1882, on the same tax-paying terms as to men. Not only have Buddhist, Confucianist and Mohammedan women been qualified to vote, but they have done so regularly for many years.\*

Growing out of this gift of municipal suffrage arises naturally the question as to *the international aspect of the parliamentary suffrage for women*. While Norway, Finland, Iceland, Australasia, and thirteen of the United States of America have already granted the vote to women, we are confronted with some so-called cultured countries in Europe, where women are forbidden by law even to be members of political organizations. A curious anomaly was noted in 1912 in Bohemia, where, acting on feudal rights, a woman was successful in being elected to the Diet, and yet under Imperial law was forbidden to join her own party organization. Of some countries in Europe, such as Poland, Portugal, Servia, it may still be true that little outward manifestation of a suffrage movement is seen, but no country is free from the stirring of new life among women, and the uprising of women leaders in varied forms of social service. In due time, and that time will almost certainly be hastened by the present war, women in all the

\* "Woman Citizen Library," edited by Shailer Matthews. Vol. 7, "Woman Suffrage."

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leading nations will find themselves called upon to share the national responsibilities as well as the national burdens. For the more any nation recognizes that in its midst the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Peace needs to be established, the more it turns to its women as well as its men. In the great battle for righteousness there can be no doubt that women's efforts and women's votes have aided beyond all computation the men who also have upheld the best causes.

A resolution passed by the Senate of the Commonwealth of Australia in November, 1910, and cabled to Mr. Asquith, reads as follows:—

“ That this Senate is of opinion that the extension of the suffrage to the women of Australia for States and Commonwealth Parliaments on the same terms as to men, has had the most beneficial results. It has led to the more orderly conduct of elections, and at the last Federal elections the women's vote in a majority of States showed a greater proportionate increase than that cast by men. It has given a greater prominence to legislation particularly affecting women and children, although the women have not taken up such questions to the exclusion of others of wider significance. In matters of Defence and Imperial concern they have proved themselves as far-seeing and discriminating as

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men. Because the reform has brought nothing but good, though disaster was freely prophesied, we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying representative Government would be well advised in granting votes to women."

The list of remedial legislation definitely influenced by women in direct and indirect ways would vary in different countries, but the short summary of some of the enactments in Australia would be almost equally true of other lands :—

Old-age pensions ; Equal pay for equal work ; Anti-opium legislation ; Anti-gambling legislation ; Anti-liquor legislation ; Equal naturalization laws ; Legitimization of children born out of wedlock ; Probation system for juvenile and adult delinquents ; Raising the age of consent ; Invalid pensions, etc.

Much more than women's votes, however, is needed to obtain remedial legislation, and the history of the fight against ignorance and apathy in each country is an interesting one. There must be a passion for reform, and that in turn can only be kindled at an altar where burns the flame of love for God and man. This cause is eagerly and devotedly championed by many who are not identified with religious work, but the history of the secret prayer that has accompanied and

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uplifted much of the work would make another chapter in the great apologetic of the prayer-life. Misunderstood by would-be friends, frustrated by enemies, checkmated by hostile legislatures, to many women the cause of righteousness and of the freedom of womankind has brought the pain of persecution as really as to better-known martyrs of old. Near them, too, has stood the One who bore pain even to the cross and conquered ; with Him they learn the joy of unselfish suffering and of conquest by its means.

It would be but a superficial study of the Movement in these many lands which would not show how deeply rooted it is in the soil of Christian thought and principle. We see it at once in the lands so newly rising to claim a free place for women ; if it had not been for Christian pioneers in India, China, and Japan, it is unlikely that women would have begun to shake themselves free from the binding restrictions of the old life and customs. Beneath the shelter of the Christian home, Eastern women dare to seek self-realization as never before, and as workers in the Christian Church they find the co-operation and backing which they need before they can work for great causes of moral and social reform.

One of the strongest proofs of the Christian position which the Movement takes in most lands is the outcry which at once arises against any

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anti-Christian or anti-moral bias when it appears. Wherever an erotic tendency has been noted in any branch of the Movement, it has at once been disclaimed and set aside by the mass of steady and well-balanced women who form the greater part of the leadership. In Germany the *Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine* refused affiliation to the *Mutterschutz* on account of the demand on the part of some of its branches for the sanction of *freien Verhältnissen*.

In lands where Christian thought has for centuries to some extent permeated public opinion, it is perhaps not at first sight so clear that, apart from our Lord Jesus Christ, the Movement as a whole could not have originated. Yet historical study soon shows us the Christian origin of the type of love which has learned to identify itself with down-trodden women, of the depth of self-sacrifice which has made fruitful the lives of the countless leaders who have marched before us at great cost along the path we now follow so easily. Christ has been the inspirer of the willing service which is so dominant a note in the life of the greatest women workers in all lands. Apart from His strength, received by faith and prayer, many a woman, a Josephine Butler, a Frances Willard, a Pandita Ramabai, could never have held on steadfastly to the great ideal and the great emancipation.

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This statement may indeed raise a protest in the minds of many. On the one hand, many sincere Christian men and women find it difficult to associate themselves with the Movement in some European countries, because they are confronted by the fact that it has been largely under the ægis of some social democratic party which holds aloof from the Christian position. In yet another, Christian women shrink back from some of the writers who in the name of the Movement have claimed as women's right, freedom from the Christian standards of love and marriage—holding a view of sex relationships which is in direct contradiction to the highest Christian ideals. In yet another country the difficulty is different, for it is a conservative or Catholic society which has thrown its protection over women's suffrage for political reasons. And so for one reason or another many hesitate to array themselves on the side of the Woman's Movement, however great their secret sympathy. On the other hand, many women have been deeply hurt by the apathy of their fellow Christians in regard to this Movement with its great aspirations and desire for development for the sake of service; and there are undoubtedly at this time two streams running side by side in the Movement, one of which consciously finds its source and inspiration in the Christian faith, and the other which acknowledges no such



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origin and would refuse to own the Christian allegiance.

The spread of the Movement to lands where Christian leaders are still few and far between makes the international character of our work a matter for serious thought, and the continued apathy of some of these very leaders is a matter of grave concern. It is well to face these dangers. In countries where for centuries marriage has been a necessity for all women, and those marriages have been arranged for them, with a sudden burst new ideas of social life have come. The old conventions do not fit the new life. Social confusion results. Men and women are determined to meet each other, and as they hear of unchaperoned parties in America, a group of Chinese men-students will invite girls to a social function where the feasting and jollity go on far into the night. Literature is being read in Japan and elsewhere, with so-called advanced ideas of society, and the theories of free love do not confine themselves to theories. Ladies in some of the larger Eastern cities are filling their newly-emancipated lives with gambling, suppers, theatres. There are new instincts aroused, a new ambition to drink deep of modern life—and yet withal a pathetic ignorance of the self-imposed limits which most women in Western lands place upon such freedom. In so many cases the ideal of self-realization has come, but not yet the

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corresponding ideal of the Woman's Movement, the service of others. Commercialized amusements and base literature will be promoted by those Western people who seize their opportunities for money's sake, and meanwhile those others who could lead Eastern women along the lines of truest development are so often lamentably blind to their opportunity, yes, more, their responsibility. Between the women of Europe, America and Asia there should surely be a perpetual interchange of anything that is high and pure and good, any newly-seen vision of possibility, any achievement won, that so we may together search more deeply into the will of God for modern women. Everywhere temptation and danger beset our Movement, as they beset all things with great potentialities for good, but more especially must that danger loom large in countries where either agnosticism has for a season gained on Christianity or where as yet the Christian forces are set in the midst of an overpowering numerical majority of non-Christian people.

It is of vital moment, then, that the new women leaders, marked out as they are, should be helped by those of riper Christian experience and education, so that they too may enter into the heritage of true freedom and the joy of the most fruitful service of Christ. Herein lies to-day a new motive for international missionary service :

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the spectacle of Eastern women setting out alone to tread the perilous path of emancipation calls afresh to the sister-spirit in the hearts of Western women who have already discovered God's sure guidance in the Woman's Movement, and they offer their life-service to women afar off. "Can it be mere coincidence, and not part of the Divine plan, that the progress of the women in Western lands has produced in regular succession exactly the class of workers called for by the needs of the East: spirited pioneer wives brave enough to enter unopened fields, well educated enough to understand and support their husbands' work and to lay the foundation of special work for women and girls; then medical women for pioneering work; then educational missionaries for more developed stages; lastly to-day, statesmen and administrators to share in the upbuilding of the Church in the East?" \*

Throughout the history of the Woman's Movement, in each nation in turn women have risen up willing to face a fierce battle for their sisters' sakes. In the great war to-day women are pressing forward to uphold the banner of their nation and to undertake those great causes which had been championed before by the men who are now needed for other service. In the greatest battle of all,

\* "Missions and the Women's Movement," by Ruth Rouse, p. 19.

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the fight for the Kingdom of our Lord and Master, whether near at home or in the still needier countries far away, we are confident that that same eager willingness for service will move those that acknowledge the rule of Christ, to offer themselves as helpers for the women of other lands still struggling for freedom and for fullness of life.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### *THE NATURE OF GOVERNMENT.*

WILLIAM TEMPLE.

POLITICAL philosophers have busied themselves exceedingly with questions concerning the origin of society, the authority of law and the like. On the whole it may be said that amid all divergencies a central strand of conviction runs through them all—and that one which commands the general acceptance of thoughtful people as soon as it is disentangled and made plain. It is, roughly speaking, that which governs the whole of Plato's thought in "The Republic," and we cannot do better than follow his general guidance.

I. If all men were selfish and nothing else they would, as a matter of fact, organize themselves into a society. Let us try to picture the life of man without either sympathy or society. It is what Hobbes calls "The State of Nature," wherein he justly maintains, "there is no place for industry ;

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because the fruit thereof is uncertain : and consequently no Culture of the Earth ; no Navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by Sea ; no commodious Building ; no Instruments of moving and removing such things as require much force ; no Knowledge of the face of the Earth ; no account of Time ; no Arts ; no Letters ; no Society ; and which is worst of all, continuall feare, and danger of violent death ; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short."

People discover that in the process of the competition to which this selfishness gives rise, each is at every point at a disadvantage. With regard to any given commodity which any one possesses, he finds the hands of all against him. An agreement therefore gradually grows up to respect certain rights which are constituted by this very agreement. The whole society places its collective force at the disposal of a government, which is established precisely for the sake of maintaining those various rights which the agreement has constituted. Thus each is secured in the possession of his own property by the desire of all the rest to be themselves secure in the possession of any property which they have or at any future time may have.

So far society will always appear to rest upon force, because its manifestation will be the exercise

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of force against any individual member who contravenes the right set up by the agreement which is the basis of the society ; and so far as society is at the moment held together by the police force and the whole penal system, this is a true account of our own civilization.

It is to be recognized, however, that even at this stage force is not, as indeed it cannot be, the actual basis. Force is a dead thing which can only act, or be set in action, by human wills. However much force is actually employed in the maintenance of the social fabric, the real foundation of that fabric must none the less always be consent. This consent may indeed be purely habitual and unconscious, but it must be present. In face of a history which tells of nations governed by despotic kings, it is absurd to say that government rests upon force in any literal and exact sense. The force of the despot depends upon the willingness of his subjects, or at least of his soldiers, to obey his orders.

2. But there is another principle altogether upon which society may rest. This is the principle of co-operation. Men find that as a matter of fact they are more effective in combination and they discover a joy in fellowship, however the fellowship may originally have been constituted ; and this would lead men to desire an organized social life quite apart from any selfish competition



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whatsoever. Men have different gifts, and each needs the product of the gift of all. Consequently the higher good is reached not through every one trying to do everything, but through each doing that for which he is qualified and bringing the result to a common store in which all may share. Thus self-interest, in so far as it rests upon the elementary needs of man, is better satisfied through the life of fellowship than through the life of competition in every respect except the desire for mere triumph over others.

3. Actual society rests on both of these foundations. An ideally bad society would embody the former principle alone ; an ideally good society would embody the latter alone. Progress is in theory, and has been in fact, the steady development of the principle of co-operation and fellowship as compared with that of competition and antagonism. The acceptance of Majority-rule, as if the will of the majority were the will of all, is a step in that direction ; but still more important and significant is the gradual substitution of settlement by discussion in committees for the official party-combats in the House of Commons. Throughout the industrial and commercial world the same tendency is observable. If our labour disputes are nowadays more serious than in the past, it is precisely because both Labour and

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Capital are becoming more co-operative and less competitive in themselves, so that when engaged in direct conflict with one another, a larger body of "forces" is engaged on either side.

If any state action seems to be the mere application of force, it is the legal punishment of criminals. Yet even here it is the social rather than the egoistic group of motives to which appeal is actually made. Even under the category of penal law the most effective part of a verdict of "Guilty" is not the pain or inconvenience inflicted by way of punishment—and this is all that force can ever achieve—but the moral censure of the community represented by the condemnation of a court. It is the stigma, and not the inconvenience, of imprisonment that most people would especially fear. But this already means that even at that point where the State expresses its judgments through force, it is the principle of fellowship as represented by a man's desire for the good opinion of his fellow citizens, which is really predominantly operative. Progress, then, has consisted in the steady development of the predominance of fellowship over competition as the basal principle of the social system.

4. But this progress has hardly yet begun in the organization of international affairs. There, speaking broadly, we are still in Hobbes' "State of

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Nature." A nation is far more self-supporting and self-sufficient than an individual, and some nations are more or less content with affairs as they are ; but even so, it is a selfish contentment ; and a nation which is not thus content inevitably becomes " aggressive " and therewith " militarist." On the whole, the democracies are more disposed to be content, for the " glory " of expansion, which comes so abundantly to the conquering despot, has to be spread rather thin for every free citizen to secure his share. Also the sovereignty is more secure in a democracy, because the number of people who may wish to shift its place is likely to be small, whereas the despot or group of oligarchs may always need to secure their own position by focussing popular wrath upon an external foe. For these reasons autocracy, or anything resembling it, is likely to be more " militarist " than democracy ; and in fact it is just the autocracies of contemporary Europe that are especially marked by " militarism."

Militarism is due to the temper of a nation's foreign policy ; but it reacts upon internal administration. If war is regarded as the State's chief function (as many in Germany seem to think it), rather than an odious, though sometimes unavoidable, interruption of all that is really worth caring for (as England, France, and America are agreed in thinking), this will inevitably create

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in the minds of citizens a tendency to regard the State as resting on, or rather as consisting of, Force; Treitschke's definition of the State as Power was ignored in England (till we found in astonishment that Germans really believed it) precisely because it was so remote from our political experience and general habit of thought that the phrase itself conveyed no meaning to our minds.

5. The importance of these considerations is due to the fact that one of the main objections to Women's Suffrage is precisely that Society rests on Force. It has been shown that in the strict sense this is not and could not be true; but it has also been shown that in so far as Force plays a great part in the maintenance of any actual social fabric, this is due to the presence in that fabric of those elements which are in steady process of elimination as progress advances. The difficulty, therefore, which arises from women's inferiority in physical strength becomes steadily less, and that in proportion as social progress advances. And indeed we find that just where Force plays the largest part in the prevalent conception of the State, there least scope for activity is allowed to women. Germany is, of course, the most obvious example of this; but, rather unexpectedly, the principle is illustrated in a curious way by Russia. Russia as an Empire is a military autocracy; but

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as far as local affairs and the daily life of the mass of the citizens are concerned, it is highly democratic, and its democracy is rather communistic than competitive; along with this goes a far greater freedom for women than is to be found in Germany.

It is possible therefore to approach the problem of women's suffrage as follows: we may admit that throughout a certain stage of human development women would be out of place in politics, for just the reason that Force was inevitably so large a factor; but we may hold that that stage is ended, or is even now ending, so that this ground at least for excluding women no longer exists.

6. The war has served to clarify the issue. It has brought a wholly new revelation of what may be involved in making Force the final arbiter. There are some who say: "See what politics really are; this war is a part of them; it finally proves the absurdity of the demand for Women's Suffrage." Others will say: "See what politics are; and yet how few believe that they need be such; Women's Suffrage is just the new element needed to end this Inferno for ever in civilized lands."

The really vital point is easy enough to state; however much society is actually held together by force, it need not be so held together. There

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can be no doubt that the admission of women to full political rights would tend very greatly to diminish the prominence of force, partly because (owing to their inferiority in physical force) their influence would be thrown into the other scale, but much more because their very admission would be the symbol of the ejection of force from its position of domination. One of the points to which mankind is curiously blind is the moral influence of political institutions and social organization. These are, in fact, the great educators. The rising generation receives from these—quite unconsciously as a rule—the standards alike of its ambitions and its judgments. The exclusion of women from full political rights is itself a potent influence in three ways: it creates a belief that women are unfit for politics (which may or may not be true, but should not be accepted merely through the influence of an arrangement that is itself called in question); by forcing this belief it actually makes women unfit for politics, because human beings as a rule become very much what other human beings expect of them; and it creates a belief that politics are unfit for women.

7. To this point we must now turn. The opponent generally urges that women have not the political gifts, but have others that politics would spoil. “It is not that women are not good enough

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for politics ; they are too good for politics." The assumption is that politics must always be a wrangle if not a fight ; the counting of heads is only substituted for the breaking of them as a matter of convenience. It was lately urged, with reference even to an ecclesiastical assembly, that the presence of women would hamper debating by making men shy to use the weapons of irony and sarcasm ! What are those weapons doing in a Christian assembly, or in any other assembly that wishes to find the truth ?

No doubt politics is often " a dirty game " ; no doubt in any effort people must act by the methods which are alone effective ; and there is no question that in a certain stage the loss by women's contamination would be greater than the gain they would confer. This must be faced quite squarely. Some who are eager for the suffrage say : " The question is not whether women might be damaged by politics, and therefore ought to stay outside, but whether political responsibility ought to be denied them if they ask it, or whether they have any right to shirk political responsibility, whatever it may bring in its train." Of course, this is the right spirit ; but in any case of sacrifice the question must be asked, " Is the result worth the price ? " We need in women, as in every one else, the readiness for any sacrifice that may bear a worthy fruit ; but the fruit must be worthy. The



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community would be very ill-advised to let its women be seriously degraded in character for the sake of the very small gain which, when thus degraded, they could secure for its political life.

The crucial fact, however, is the rapid growth of reasonable methods in politics. More and more questions are settled by general agreement and without the military pomp of a "full-dress debate." And the reason for this is to be found in the very fact which constitutes the strongest argument for women's suffrage—namely, that politics are increasingly concerned with the daily life of the people. When housing and the feeding of children are discussed in Parliament, it becomes increasingly intolerable that mere controversy should be our only method, and increasingly absurd that women should not have a direct voice in the decision. The readiness for government by discussion and co-operation, as distinct from debate and party antagonism, is so far developed that the appearance of women in the political arena would itself be enough to effect the desired change. Their admission therefore would bring far more benefit to the community in the gain to our political life than loss to our general life through any deterioration in women themselves.

8. But quite apart from questions of "too good" or "not good enough," the objector may

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urge that women's gifts are simply different from men's, and that their gifts do not fit them for politics. Usually this rests on a doubt of women's reasoning powers. Now it is probably true that women excel chiefly in sympathetic intuition ; they understand individuals better than principles. And legislation must be mainly concerned with principles. But there are many equally true considerations to be weighed. In the first place, any past weakness in the faculty of reasoning may be accounted for by relative lack of education and opportunity ; secondly, our politics would gain greatly from the intuitive faculties of women, to which allusion has been made, for our legislation and administration both suffer seriously from their abstract and unsympathetic nature, sacrificing the individual perpetually to general principles which are often mere red-tape ; but above all, the war, which reveals what government relying mainly upon force works out at, has also revealed the practical and intellectual power of women in a very high degree. The recognition by the War Office of Dr. Garrett Anderson and her assistants is a conspicuous example. Women have planned and organized as efficiently as men ; and women have thought as deeply and thoroughly about the problems of life during the war and after it. They are already doing State service and influencing State action ; but their service is hampered and

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their influence deadened by the fact that full recognition is not accorded them. Their claim for the vote is a claim to be allowed to serve more fully in spheres wherein their service is already given and already welcomed.

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### CHAPTER VIII.

#### *THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT, THE CHRISTIAN ETHIC AND THE INDIVIDUAL.*

ZOË FAIRFIELD.

“ And God created man in His own Image, in the Image of God created He him ; male and female created He them.”

**I**T is generally understood that there is such a thing as Christian morality, in particular a view of the relation between the sexes, which is peculiarly Christian. It is doubtful whether many people have any clear conception as to what exactly is this Christian view. Many respectable people conclude that it is the conventional moral code of the Christian land in which they live. Any revolt against this code shocks them deeply (until they become used to it), not necessarily because the revolt is un-Christian, but because it shakes their own moral foundations, which are made up very largely of convention and public opinion.

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Conventional morality in regard to the sexes or property, or anything else, is not of necessity Christian at all. Marriage, for instance, is not a peculiarly Christian institution, every tribe or nation which has emerged from complete savagery has some kind of marriage law or custom, generally very elaborate. Stringent marriage laws have been framed by society for its own protection, and, at any rate in more advanced civilizations, have been a real protection to women. The fact; however, that severe penalties are always attached to any infringement of such laws by women, and that leniency is almost as commonly shown to men, is doubtless due in part to men alone having been in the position to frame the laws, and having been considerably influenced by their own desires and interests.

Any current system of morality is the outcome of a variety of causes—social necessities, national characteristics, and religious ideas—but morality has another and an unchanging origin: namely, that common human instinct which is known as conscience, the perception of good and evil. It is obviously impossible in one short chapter to discuss the nature and basis of Ethics, neither is the writer qualified to do so, but we may take comfort in the thought that the schools of the philosophers had not finished their battles about it when Christianity appeared in the world. From the

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earliest times men have never ceased to ask the question: "What is goodness?"—Why do we want to be good? Why is it not easier to be good? What motive urges us to forsake happiness and much that we desire, for the sake of "virtue?" Is it altruism? Is it enlightened self-seeking or the wish for some higher good? The average man and woman, however, does not wait to have these questions answered, before making the attempt to be good, and it is certainly true that Christianity has proved available for men and women who were incapable of understanding the answers of philosophy, even if such answers existed. There is a good deal to be said for the contention that intellectual conceptions in regard to matters of right and wrong are much more affected by life and living than are life and living affected by intellectual conceptions. The human conscience is a fact at least as certain as human reason.\*

Without, then, attempting to discuss the philosophy of ethics, we shall try to find out what Christianity has to say to some of the urgent ethical problems which are being raised for us

\* In "Marriage and the Sex Problem," Professor F. W. Foerster emphasizes the effect of the impersonal and passing impulses of sense upon reason and upon true freedom. It is difficult for us, he says, to think clearly on ethical questions because of the entanglement of our own nature. Much of what we call freedom is really the subjection of mind and spirit to the bodily senses.

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to-day, and what relation Christian ethical ideas have to the ethical ideas underlying the Woman's Movement. We shall seek to make this enquiry in the light of the influence which the Christian Faith has had on ethical ideas in the past.

Let us look, first, at the situation as we find it to-day, and seek to clear our minds about some of the elements of which it is made up.

1. There is a great deal of ethical unrest, though it is hard to estimate how much, and there is no doubt that the revolt against Christian dogma to which we have become accustomed has extended to the Christian ethic. There has been much talk of "slave-morality," "self-realization," of "living out one's life." We must go right back and seek to understand again upon what foundation the Christian code is built. We cannot take our ethical conceptions any more than our theological conceptions for granted; and the two are more intimately bound together than is always recognized. A good many old-fashioned people have told us this before, but, living as we do, in an atmosphere saturated with Christian thought and practice, we have been slow to believe them. Many people have thought that they could hold to the ethic and leave the rest. As a matter of fact, the Christian ethic was an organic growth from the historic faith simply held by simple people.



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2. We have to remember that the causes of the unrest and stirring of the world in which we live are outside our control. The circumstances in which we find ourselves to-day are the result of the industrial revolution, of the spread of general education and of cheap literature, good and bad, the popularization of modern science, and also of increased facilities for travel and change of all kinds. The present situation was made before we were born. Our task is to grapple with it, not to grumble about it, or to shirk it. We must go forward, not backward. The position of women, in particular, is entirely changed. Lecky, at the close of his "History of European Morals," speaking of the changes which are coming, writes :—

"That the pursuits and education of women will be considerably altered, that these alterations will bring with them some modifications of the type of character, and that the prevailing moral notions concerning the relations of the sexes will be subjected in many quarters to a severe and hostile criticism, may safely be predicted. Many wild theories will doubtless be propounded. Some real ethical changes may perhaps be effected, but these, if I mistake not, can only be within definite and narrow limits. He who will seriously reflect upon our clear perceptions of the difference between purity and impurity, upon the laws that govern our affections, and upon the interests of the

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children that are born, may easily convince himself that in this, as in all other spheres, there are certain natural moral land-marks which can never be removed."

3. These new conditions have produced a new attitude towards authority of all kinds, and a new insistence on freedom. This new attitude has been clearly recognized, and to a large extent accepted, in relation to men, it is only now being recognized in relation to women. The Woman's Movement is part of the great movement towards liberty which has been sweeping round the world.\* "We shall never understand the Awakening of Woman," writes Mrs. Sidney Webb,† "until we realize that it is not mere *feminism*. It is one of three simultaneous world movements towards a more equal partnership among human beings in human affairs. To future historical philosophers we may leave the analysis of how far these three simultaneous movements all over the world are parts one of another. For the moment it is enough to note that the movement for women's emancipation is paralleled, on the one hand by the International Movement of Labour—the banding together of the manual classes to obtain their 'place in

\* See also "Sex," Thomson and Geddes, pp. 220-222.

† *The New Statesman*, Special Supplement on "The Awakening of Women," Nov., 1913.

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the sun'—and, on the other, by the unrest of subject-peoples struggling for freedom to develop their own peculiar civilizations. And all three movements are progressing towards achievement. Within the great streams, there are, in each case, cross currents of method and immediate aim, oft-times appearing in mutual opposition, but swinging eventually, in the same direction."

Miss Rouse writes\* : "Liberating movements have been a distinctive feature of the Christian era—the abolition of slavery in the ancient and again in the modern world : the enfranchisement of the middle classes in the eighteenth century : the education and enfranchisement of the working classes in the nineteenth century : and now, again, the higher education and enfranchisement of women. Directly, or indirectly, every one of these movements, including the last, spring from the permeation of human thought with our Lord's teaching on the value of the human soul."

4. The factor which has been the most evil influence in the situation is the pressure of materialism, the materialism not of scientific theory, but of the facts of every-day life. The pressure of the struggle with material forces is felt everywhere, by manual labourers, by business men, and by working women of all types. There is a constant

\* "Foreign Missions and the Woman's Movement in the West" (p. 7).

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drain on spiritual resources, the rush and pressure of life lead to natural reaction and desire for relaxation and pleasure, and that very often of a material kind. Foerster writes: "The man of to-day is very poorly educated for the deeper art of love, and he is, moreover, inwardly impoverished by the strain of over-work and modern life."\* And again: "The proclamation of the 'right to sex life' is the inevitable psychological consequence of numbers of people being deprived of any deeper inward reasons for continence and self-sacrifice. . . . They feel that non-religious, social morality involves a crucifixion without a resurrection, this they cannot endure." If people are to put soul before body, if we are to see a re-birth of idealism, the basis of our social system must be radically changed.

5. The whole situation is curiously complex and full of every kind of cross-current. The Woman's Movement is profoundly affected by all the conditions of modern life, and reflects the currents and cross-currents of many conflicting theories. This is particularly manifest in its attitude to moral questions, and is the cause of endless misunderstanding and friction. It is full of apparent confusion, contradiction and paradox. It stands to many as a growing moral force, making a noble

\* p. 26 ; p. 29.

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protest against the double standard of morality, against the horrors of the white slave traffic, against the curse of professional prostitution, against many evils which affect marriage. It is throwing its energies into fighting the social evil, agitating for legislation which will deal with such questions as the raising of the age of consent, and secure a more equitable marriage law. It is giving itself to the serious consideration of sound and positive sex education. To others, the whole Movement seems fraught with moral danger and full of moral confusion. Some of those who support it seem to be obsessed by sex questions, others seem to abhor and belittle the whole idea of sex. Some claim the right to motherhood for all women, married or unmarried, others are popularly supposed to refuse motherhood for the sake of a career (this is far truer of the more pleasure-loving women to whom the Woman's Movement means nothing, than it is of those of whom it is composed). In some directions there are evidences of sex war ; in others, a preaching of free love.

This, then, is the situation. One thing which is clear amid all the confusion, is that women as well as men are restless, thoroughly alive, asking questions. They are no longer willing to submit to ethical standards which have been set for them by the male conscience of the community ; they are

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passionately aware that such standards have often been allowed to imply the degradation of whole classes of women ; they see that chivalry has failed in the pressure of modern life. They are aware of the necessity of finding and being judged by their own standards, the standards of free human beings, voluntarily accepted. They are determined to know the truth, to face the facts of life, to fight the battles of their sex and take the risks. They refuse absolutely to accept a safety which is theirs only at the cost of other women.

There can be no doubt that many moral and religious conventions will have to be readjusted ; that is to say, that in the face of modern needs we have to ask ourselves what in our moral code is true and fundamental and calls for fuller application, what is conventional and temporary ? Out of it all a deeper and purer and fuller conception of the relation of men and women may and will come.

As Christians, and remembering all that we have been taught to believe that Christianity has meant for morality and for womanhood in the past, we ask ourselves : Can we look to Christianity for further light, guidance, and power ?

To answer these questions we ought to make a careful study of the history of European morals, and also of the history which is even now in the

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making throughout the non-Christian world. A scientific investigation of the actual effects of Christian teaching on morals and particularly on the position of women in non-Christian lands to-day, would provide invaluable material for our enquiry, and such an investigation undoubtedly needs to be made. We must content ourselves with a brief summary of the general moral effect of the first centuries of Christianity in Europe, and cannot do better than quote a well-known passage from Lecky :—

“ The high conception that has been formed of the sanctity of human life, the protection of infancy, the elevation and final emancipation of the slave classes, the suppression of barbarous games, the creation of a vast and multifarious organization of charity, and the education of the imagination by the Christian type, constitute together a movement of philanthropy which has never been paralleled or approached in the pagan world. The effects of this movement in promoting happiness have been very great. Its effect in determining character has probably been still greater.”

This quotation has been chosen not merely as the summary by an historian of what did actually happen, but because it expresses so clearly the working of the great principle which lies at the root of Christian morality—the belief in the supreme value of a human soul. This conception of the



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sanctity of human life is the ground of the moral achievement of Christianity.

It is important to remember that this new idea of the value of the individual transformed the lives and thought not only of apostles and teachers and thinkers, but equally of simple people, fisher folk, slaves and women. And also that the results were not reached at once or even speedily at all points. The history of moral progress in Christendom is one of ups and downs, of courage and compromise, of a great idea working its way into life and not of a cut and dried view of the universe ready for use. Progress is checked again and again; there are set-backs and reactions. It is, for instance, both helped and hindered by the rise of asceticism in Christendom (asceticism itself was not of Christian origin). The growth of religious persecutions within the Church, and the suppression of free thought, hindered and frustrated the progressive action of the spirit of love and freedom, which is the living force of our faith and the secret of its abiding power.

The same thing is going on to-day, the same idea is struggling for expression, and the same forces are at work to frustrate and confuse it. The growing emphasis on the value of personality is showing itself in a great variety of ways, in the closer study of the child, in psychology, in the region of

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spiritual and mental healing, and, above all, in the great political movements of the time and in the Woman's Movement.

In this struggle as it concerns the relations between men and women some are confused by the remnants of that false asceticism which teaches a low view of such relationships ; hampered by the conventional thinking and lack of courage in many orthodox circles : afraid of freedom.\* Others, exaggerating the claims of sex instinct, demand a liberty which is really slavery to desire and a denial at once of the freedom of personality, of the control of flesh by spirit, of the triumph of the human over the animal in man. Asceticism at its best is a protest against this essentially sensual conception of freedom. All human history is a witness to the sad possibilities of sexual degeneracy when once the will is dethroned, and the passions set free. In this connection every serious student of the subject should read Professor Foerster's book "Marriage and the Sex Problem." He says the wisest things in the most irritating

\* Mrs. Creighton writes in "The Social Disease, and how to fight it" : "Rules and restrictions could not create a pure society . . . Christ came to bring freedom for all. But even the great Apostle, who proclaimed the message of freedom to the world, knew it must come slowly. . . . The long struggle has gone on to fit men and women to live together in freedom and in purity, to bring about the rule of the spirit. Men and women alike have feared freedom . . . Many even to this day undervalue liberty." (pp. 31, 32.)

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way, and he himself blazes with furious irritation against the conceit of individualism and the claim of the ignorant to pronounce judgment on profound ethical problems. Speaking of freedom he writes :—

“ What is freedom, and what sort of freedom is desired ? How is true personal freedom attained and maintained ? If freedom for caprice and passion, for desire and lust is meant, then indeed rigid form is enemy to the path of freedom. If the meaning is freedom for the moral and spiritual man and for his need of complete control over the allurements of the senses and over his own physical conditions, then rigid form is the true bulwark of freedom, the sole guarantee for and surest means of attaining true personal life . . . It places him (man) beyond the reach of attack by transient allurements and merely sensuous impulses.

“ In the realm of sex momentary impulses and passion chiefly tend to rob us of insight and perspective and to isolate us both from our best and most personal self and from the general order of life. . . .\*

“ Whoever pictures to himself . . . what will happen and must happen in a society in which sexual relationships are placed at the mercy of the individual alone, without restraining form and morality, will know that it is not the great love

\* Op. cit., p. 31.

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which will be free, but our petty passion, our intoxication of the senses, our craving for change, our transient passion, our faithless egoism.”\*

The message of Christianity to us must be the same as that which worked itself out in the early triumphant days. The present situation at its best and worst constitutes a demand for its fuller and more courageous preaching. That message was and is based on the teaching of our Lord and on the facts of His life and death and on the essential nature of the Christian Church. These things gave to the world an entirely new standard of values. Our Lord taught that there was nothing of any value in comparison with the value of a human soul, and He taught men to believe in a Father Who had numbered the very hairs of their head. The essential facts as believed by the early Church are that He, the Son of God, was born of a woman ; that on the cross we see God suffering for man, not for the righteous, but for the sinful and degraded, and through this suffering, the righteous for the unrighteous, triumphing over all the powers of evil ; that in the Church we have the Body of Christ, indwelt by His Spirit—the organ of His redemptive Will : that in the fellowship of that Body there is complete spiritual equality, there is neither male nor female, bond

\* Op. cit., p. 36.

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nor free, Jew nor barbarian. The barriers of class, sex and nationality are done away.\* This is no place to discuss the faith of the Christian Church, we simply remind ourselves that it was in this faith that she turned the world upside down ; it was in this faith that a new world came into being. This much is clear—that Christ's standard of values, which makes love and reverence the keynote of human life and of human relationships, is the only standard which can solve the problems of our modern life, and it is at one with the inmost soul of the Woman's Movement.

Again and again the demands of this Movement have been defined as the demand for freedom or self-development, and the demand for service. Service without freedom is slavery ; so, in practice, is freedom without service ; slavery to the lower self. The Woman's Movement is the expression of the instinctive desire of women to rise to full liberty of soul, to fullest development as human beings. Its more exaggerated and anarchic forms are, like most heresies, the outcome of disproportionate emphasis on neglected truth. To serve whole-heartedly, to give without stint, is an essential part of the development of a free woman.

\* Barriers, that is to say, not characteristics or special contributions or differing gifts. The thought of the Body is of that in which each several part is different but essential.

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It may be true, say some, that we need the Christian message, but has not the Church herself forgotten to give her message? There is a great sameness about the criticisms of the Church once one goes outside the ranks of the orthodox. These criticisms are, probably, only partially true and less true every day, but the accusation in general is that the Church was once known as a body of people who were turning the world upside down, while to-day she is accused of lack of courage, lack of frankness, of conventionality, conservatism, of a timid clinging to the letter, and of a fear of liberty and of the freedom of the spirit. She shows little capacity for enlightened leadership. She seems to men and women with a deepening social consciousness and a growing sense of the meaning of fellowship and brotherhood, and very specially to women with their growing sense of solidarity, to preach a curiously individualistic morality. Her attitude towards sin seems entirely different from that of the New Testament, the relative emphasis she places on sins of the flesh and sins of the spirit appears to be quite different to the emphasis which it would seem our Lord placed upon them. We find in many quarters to-day a growing social conscience side by side with a deepening revolt against what is commonly called Christian morality. Does not this mean that sex morality cannot be isolated,

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and that no code will hold men and women to-day which does not say that any contempt for human personality is equally wicked? If she would command belief the Church cannot be stern to the point of cruelty about, for instance, divorce, and at the same time, cautious about questions of social reform, willing to compromise with sins of pride, unkindness, and greed. To many women it seems that the Church they have served so well has shown a curious apathy towards the horrible evils of which they are for the first time becoming aware, a curious slowness in understanding their passion and their aspirations. It seems to many of them that she has withheld help from them, partly from lack of spiritual sympathy, partly from cowardice. That so many women feel this and feel it intensely constitutes one of the most serious moral dangers of the modern world.

There is, perhaps, one thing that can usefully be said at this point, and that is, that we who belong to the Church, should not expect and wait for other people to say the things that ought to be said and do the things that ought to be done. If we believe that Christ is the answer to the world's need, that the Gospel is the only message that can avail us, then it is for those of us who believe it to proclaim it. Why wait for others? Why wait to



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be asked? Why not think and pray and act ourselves? That is the way, and the only way in which leaders are made.

There have been certain elements in the teaching of the Christian Church about sex relationships which are fairly apparent to the ordinary person, and which have been generally consistent. In any serious study of this subject it would be absurd not to recognize and allow for these fixed elements, even if one holds oneself free to believe that they need modification and development. These elements are roughly speaking : the recognition in theory, at least, of the duty of chastity alike for men and women, the conception of a love other than, and higher than passion, the sanctity and indissolubility of marriage (this has been differently defined by different sections of the Church), the duty of child-bearing, the importance and claim of the child (on this point the influence of the early Church, and of the Church in the mission field, on infanticide, is worth studying) the sanctity of home and family life. The influence of the place given in the Roman Catholic Church to the Mother of our Lord and the effect of this on the thought of Europe, the moral effects of the teaching of the Reformation and of the Protestant reaction against the teaching of the Roman Church, the influence of Catholic and Puritan asceticism, are all things

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which need study, but about which very little material appears to be available.\* Any one who claims any degree of historical sense ought to study these things.

There is no short cut out of our difficulties, no royal road of advance, but there is always hope if we can find a great and unifying principle in the light of which we can go forward with patience and courage to learn and to think and to strive. This principle is to be found in Christ's standard of reverence and of love.

In closing, we would indicate very briefly some of the ways in which the acceptance of love and reverence as the true basis of human relationships would affect the spirit in which we approach the difficult ethical questions, theoretical and practical, which are facing us all :

1. *All who desire to be of any service must face facts.* They must know the truth as to the moral failure and tragedy of human life. Christ came that men might be redeemed from this very failure and tragedy. The suggestion that we should think lightly of sin is ridiculous: the suggestion that we should ignore it is cowardice. We must face the facts as to social disease, the facts about prostitution, its extent and causes:

\* See chapter I.

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(let us be sure that they are facts), the facts of the horrible moral evils which ruin the lives of children, and, indeed, all the facts about which women are thinking and caring. We must face these facts without fear, but because the truth is sometimes terrible, we must never allow ourselves to forget the crowning and solemn and urgent necessity of reverence for all human life, however, degraded, which nothing can destroy. Selfish ignorance is a crime : but so also is carelessness, morbid curiosity, and incessant and superficial talking. Reverence forbids these things.

2. *We must learn to think, to replace catch-words with reality.* For instance, there is far too much superficial thinking about double standards, too much self-complacency among women about moral issues. Let us be careful in our thinking not to ignore whole sets of facts, such facts as that girls and women have been the plague of the military camps, and that all who work among boys are convinced that they are frequently the tempted and not the tempters. The whole thing is too big to be played with. Careless judgments are a kind of contempt for humanity. We should not dare to trifle in our thinking. We must think hard, if we think at all, about some things. George Bernard Shaw, no lover of conventional thinking, brings out the truth in "Fanny's First Play,"

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that unless you are big enough and honest enough and have enough spiritual discernment to be original, you had much better remain behind the shelter of convention ; it will be better for yourself and far better for other people.

3. *We must be prepared to do steady work.* These new ideals must work themselves out through and transform all the ordinary channels of the work-a-day world. Negative criticism and the idealism which refuses to make experiments down in the plains, are alike rather useless. We must learn to look with new eyes at education, at local government, at all the established means of getting things done, at the humdrum work of the parishes, as well as to think out new and better ways of meeting new conditions. We must produce workers with initiative, patience, and devotion for all forms of social and religious work, as well as people who can talk about them. To us, none of these things should be common or unclean or unworthy, because they are the things which make or mar the lives of others, who are the brothers and sisters for whom Christ died, the little ones of whom He said that it were better for us that a millstone should be placed round our neck, than that through our fault, one of them should perish.

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Lastly, in thinking about right and wrong relations between men and women, we must not forget the great fact of Love. To ignore it is to bring the whole thing down to a level which is not the level of the human soul at all.

To imagine that the calm weighing of eugenic or hygienic, or even sociological considerations will avail to take the place of this most strong and transforming and incalculable of forces, is to leave the world of reality for an artificial world of the intellect, which will satisfy nobody and in which the great secrets of the human soul are not even guessed at.

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### CHAPTER IX.

#### *THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT AND THE FAMILY.*

ZOË FAIRFIELD.

THE main contention of the last chapter was that the recognition of the supreme value of the individual human soul was the key-note of the Christian ethic, as also of the Woman's Movement, and that the condition of the modern world constituted a call for the fuller understanding and application of this truth. But the world is not composed of individuals, still less of individual women, but of men and of women and of children. The man and the woman and the child must form the basis of any and every society. The family in some form is one of the fundamental things that cannot be abolished by any religion, heresy, philosophy or political scheme. There is no escape from it except by the ending of the human race. The family is an institution which may, indeed, be expected to look after itself: and, seeing that the very continuance of the race depends on the

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instincts out of which the family grows, it is probable that these instincts, whether conscious or unconscious, are the strongest things in the world.

The nature of the family relationship, the conditions of family life, the place taken by the family in the life of the tribe or state, have varied continually.\* Even in our modern world, the ideal of the private, monogamous family holds sway chiefly in the West, and, though it would seem to be gaining ground in the East, it may be gathered from recent correspondence in the newspapers, that orthodox views on the subject are by no means universally held in the West. In a recent book by Mr. Gallichan, "Women under Polygamy," a full survey has been made of the position of women under the system of plural marriage, and the case for monogamy is regarded by the author as by no means triumphantly vindicated. Most travellers, historians, and all missionaries, and the most advanced non-Christian thinkers, would, how-

\* See chapter I. Also "Sex," p. 214. Writing of the rôle of men and women in evolution, Professors Geddes and Thomson say: "Man's work and woman's work form the warp and woof of civilization, and the intertwining is so intricate that the discrimination of contributions to any particular pattern is extremely difficult. . . . The important general idea to be borne in mind is that our present social state is like a countryside with a complex geological structure, with outcrops of strata of very diverse ages. Barbarism is not dead; the mother age still lingers; the patriarchy is in great force; . . ."



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ever, be agreed that although monogamous marriage as practised in the West is by no means ideal, and although the extent to which sexual irregularity and prostitution exist side by side with so-called monogamy raises very serious questions, yet, that polygamy brings with it such a train of evils and is so degrading, both in practice and ideal, to the women concerned, that it stands self-condemned. It is difficult to have patience with some who seem to wish us seriously to re-consider it.

What is wanted is a higher and fuller ideal of monogamous family life.

It has already been apparent in this book that the changes we are facing in modern life are due to two sets of causes—to the growth of new ideas and the questioning of old conventions on the one hand; and on the other hand, to changes in outward conditions. These two sets of causes are apparent in regard to changes in family life, though they soon merge, and the problems which they raise will not be solved separately. If there is a real unity underlying life, we ought to find both contributing to one result.\* Some attempt, however, must be made to group them for purposes of discussion.

I. *Changes through changed conditions.*—The

\* Compare the movements for the intellectual training and the economic emancipation of women, chaps. III. and IV.

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transformation which has come about in the conditions of family life among the working classes in this country, owing to changed industrial conditions, has already been referred to by writers in this book ; the facts do not seem to justify the view which is sometimes taken by the casual observer, namely, that we are watching the decay of ideal family life in Great Britain. The truth is, that we know far more than we did about the lives and homes of the working classes, and we are justly horrified at the conditions in which so many of them are obliged to live and work and bring up their children. We know more because their work is no longer carried on in the privacy of the home, and we are in a position to find out what hours men and women and children work, and the wages they receive ; we more easily become aware of housing conditions in crowded city districts than in the scattered villages and small towns of past days. We need not stop to dispute as to whether the home life of the working classes in this country has improved or degenerated, we may well stop to marvel that it has survived. The survival of home life among the very poor is nothing less than a miracle, and places beyond controversy the contention that the unconscious instinct to preserve it is stronger than any power to destroy it. Surely, no one can read such books as " Round about £1 a Week," by

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Mrs. Pember Reeves, or "Across the Bridges," by Alexander Paterson, or "How the Labourer Lives," by Seebohm Rowntree, without wonder, and some measure of awe.

We hear a good deal also about what is known as the encroachment of the State on the family, and about the supposed decrease in parental responsibility associated with it. The provision of free education, the institution of health visitors, of the medical inspection of schools, and of school feeding, have all been much discussed in this connection—but the survival of family life among the poorer classes, together with such evidence as is already available as to the working of these schemes, seems to indicate that the prospect contains few of those terrors which have been imagined. It is stated by those who have experience, that the children who are fed in the schools are almost never those who would otherwise be fed at home, and that during the war, mothers have constantly removed their children from the feeding list as soon as their allowances as wives, or widows, have been paid to them; and that those who go out to work and are able to pay, if not able to provide meals for their children, almost invariably prefer to pay.\*

\* Though parental responsibility may seem lessened, in reality it has increased during the past century (vide Stuart Garnett, "Children and the Law"), *e.g.*, parents a hundred years ago were not obliged to provide their children with "nurture."

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Among the wealthier classes also, great changes have taken place. It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves that many of the things with which the average woman of the upper and middle classes used to be busy in the ordering of her home, are now done for her by other women in factories and workshops. As a rule, she is, to an extent unknown before, free to choose those things with which she will fill her time. The domestic work of a well-ordered household ought not to take up a large amount of the time of its mistress. Along with this lessening of labour, have come greatly increased opportunities for intellectual development and for professional and social service for educated women. Thus, side by side with the ideal of the woman who devotes herself exclusively to husband, home and children, there has arisen the ideal of the woman who is economically independent, earning an income alongside of her husband, and contributing with him to the upkeep of their common home and the education of their children, or who is giving a large proportion of her time and energy to professional or public work. Some would have it that this is an impossible ideal, and that a choice must be made ; to others, the ideal is a great and difficult but not an impossible one. We are reminded of women who, like Queen Victoria, ruled a nation, was a devoted wife, and the mother of nine

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children ; of Mrs. Booth,\* to whose work in the Salvation Army too high a tribute cannot be paid, who was the right hand of her husband, and who also brought up a large family, all of whom have since, we believe, become devoted workers in the same great cause.

We should also remember that until lately it has been an almost universal practice with the leisured classes to employ one, two or three nurses, as their family grew and their income increased, and that it has been regarded as inevitable that the mother, however devoted, should at an early age part with her boy, and send him, first to a preparatory and then to a public school. It is surely significant that this age, in which many see the decay of family life, has been described by others as the Age of the Child, and that, as a matter of fact, an increasing number of women are deliberately devoting themselves to the sole care of their children and dispensing altogether with nurses.

People who are concerned for the family of the professional woman—or the woman interested in public questions—should not forget the family of the woman who cares for none of these things, but whose time and energy are given to the pursuit of pleasure. It is she who is, perhaps, more than

\* See Appendix I.

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any one else, responsible for the amount of the nation's income which is wasted on luxury, for the pressure on men to increase their income without regard to the manner of the increase, for late marriages, and for the undue limitation of families. Here is the most real danger to family life.

The Woman's Movement has done much to arouse the women of the leisured classes to a sense of their grave social responsibilities : it has expressed in its more self-conscious and articulate forms not only their desire for a fuller freedom, but also their desire for fuller opportunities for service. It is significant of the growing solidarity of womanhood, of the refusal of well-to-do women to live parasitic lives, to be content to enjoy homes of ease, comfort, and luxury, while the homes of other women are subject to the physical and moral effects of degrading poverty and overwork.\*

Some considerable adjustments in family relationships are inevitable in view of these changes, and full and frank consideration ought to be given to the many practical suggestions which are demanding attention. Improvements in the conditions of family life, and in the circumstances of both the man and the woman, are of very great

\* See Thomson and Geddes, "Sex," pp. 223 and 224, for an excellent summary of the results of modern economic conditions on the lives of women of the working and middle classes.

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importance. Under healthy conditions the great human instincts of love and of parenthood will not be likely to go very far astray. This statement is made deliberately, with the fullest recognition of human frailty and sin : it is still true that love—the love of man and woman, of brother and sister, and of father and mother and child—is the strongest and most uplifting force in human life.

From this point of view the whole programme of social reform has a direct bearing on family life, but the Woman's Movement as such is chiefly concerned with such proposals as affect the economic status of women, the recognition of the rights of motherhood, and the reform of marriage laws.

Perhaps the most far-reaching and significant proposal is for the establishment of *the economic independence of women*. This phrase is difficult to define, and different people mean different things by it, but the essential element in the demand is that both before and after marriage a woman should be economically free ; her dependence on a man for the means of livelihood, as well as for any pleasure in life, is regarded by many advocates of the proposal as a form of sex slavery. They contend that, far from adding another to the forces which are making for the disintegration of the home, the economic independence of women would make for happier and nobler homes.



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No woman who is economically independent is compelled, or violently tempted, to sell herself for money. She would marry and bear children because that is the law of her being, but she would not be swayed by other unnecessary and sordid reasons ; she would be free to choose her mate.

“ What an engine of progress there is in sexual selection, we shall more clearly realize when economic conditions make more discriminate preferential mating on the woman's part possible. As women attain to economic independence, sexual selection will become better balanced.” \*

The idea of the economic independence of unmarried women workers does not as a rule raise many difficulties in people's minds. It will not be easy to secure, and involves many difficult questions of women's work and wages, but the difficulties lie mainly in the practical realm rather than in the realm of principle, and do not so materially affect home life. The payment of an adequate wage to women does not necessarily imply that women must be paid on the same scale as men, though this claim is widely and increasingly made.

The proposal that married women also should be economically independent is much more controversial. Ideally the family should be regarded as the unit and the income, by whomsoever earned,

\* “ Sex.” Thomson and Geddes, pp. 232 and 236.

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as the common income. Practically, it is not possible for the average woman to be a satisfactory wife, mother and housekeeper, and to earn an independent income. Most women are average women. This does not mean, however, that it would not be highly desirable to remove the *artificial* barriers which block the way of women in many directions: generally in the direction of well-paid professional work: seldom of badly-paid work of a kind involving hard physical strain.

*The Endowment of Motherhood* by the State is an integral part of the demand. If motherhood and the raising of children for the State is regarded as service for the State, it is contended, then let the State recognize and pay for it, thus making mothers economically independent, as such.

It must be remembered, however, that the State's money is provided by the State's citizens, including all the mothers and their respective husbands. Also, that women with large incomes of their own do not always secure independence thereby.

The endowment of the unmarried mother is a peculiarly difficult problem, and calls for serious and dispassionate thought.

The institution of allowances for widows and deserted or ill-treated wives, seems a most desirable

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and necessary reform ; it will cost far less to allow the mothers sufficient to keep their children in their own homes, than to bring them up in workhouses and institutions. Some State inspection of homes would be an essential part of the scheme. No woman ought to be subject to an evil-living man for the sole reason that she and her children could not otherwise be fed, clothed or housed.

It is still, unfortunately, only partially true, that the homes of England are the homes of the free.

It is not hard to see that the questions of women's work and wages and of the family are intimately related ; the following very brief summary of facts and of difficulties may help to shew the complexity of the situation :—

(a) “ In the England of to-day, four-and-a-half million women—*i.e.*, one-third of the whole female population over fifteen years of age—are earning their own livelihood, independently of father or husband. We find that more than two-thirds of all the girls between fifteen and twenty are described, in the new census returns, as ‘ occupied,’ *i.e.*, engaged in money-earning ; more than half (62 per cent.) of those between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, about one-third (33 per cent.) of those between twenty-five and thirty-five. After this, the proportion falls rapidly. . . . Of all the women

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workers, only about one-fourth are married or widowed.”\*

(b) Many attempts have been made to estimate the average wage of these women workers,† and the results of Board of Trade and other investigations, go to show that a very large number of these women earn less than ten shillings a week. The main bulk of the sweated workers are women. The difficulties in the way of advance are immense, and, as yet, the problem is very far from solution. One main difficulty in relation to wages lies in the comparative indifference of the main body of women themselves. The average girl looks forward to marriage, which she always hopes will be happy, and does not expect to need, or to desire permanently to “earn her own living.” The question is largely without interest to the majority of women who are happily married, and who, to some extent at least, regard themselves as sharing a common income with their husbands. Again, the unmarried woman worker in many cases has a family to fall back on, and may only wish to earn a “pocket-money” wage, and the married woman worker may simply be supplementing her husband’s earnings.

\* *The New Statesman* Special Supplement on “Women in Industry,” February, 1914.

† See Bibliography for Board of Trade reports.

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(c) Over and above the question of wages, much of the work, the conditions, and the hours, are a very severe strain on the health of young girls and women, the future wives and mothers; in the case of married women, we are met with the additional problem of the double work of women as wives and mothers as well as wage earners.

“The race must degenerate if greater and greater stress is brought to force women, during the years of child-bearing, into active and unlimited competition with men. Either a direct premium is placed upon childlessness . . . or woman has a double work to do in the world, and she can only do it at the cost of the future generation.”\*

(d) We have to face, too, the relation between economic and family conditions and professional prostitution; that such a relation exists, it is impossible to doubt. We have no right to regard ourselves as a moral people, and to pride ourselves on our monogamous marriage system, while this disgrace hangs over marriage like a baleful cloud.

As we face this problem—the reconciling of woman's work as wife and mother with her place and rights as a producer of wealth, her freedom as a human being, and her duties as a citizen—we may well resolve that we will be content with no ready-

\* Karl Pearson. “Woman and Labour.”

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made or over-simple solution. The full recognition of the essential differences of men and women, together with perfect freedom for development, are necessary conditions of progress.

Professor Thomson says: "The evolution of civilization has brought us to face problems which women are more capable of solving than men. The responsibilities of women are correspondingly great. . . . Civilization is so complex and change-ful, that not the wisest can see more than a few moves ahead."\*

2. *Changes in Ideal*.—Beneath all these, which have been called for convenience "practical considerations," we find that other great stream of change—the coming to birth of a new ideal of womanhood and of sex relationships. This, too, is finding practical expression in attempts to change the marriage laws (and the Marriage Service). But the change is one which touches things which lie outside the reach of laws, and affect deeply the lives of men and women who never come into conflict with them.

Women are asking themselves such questions as these: Is the family or is the individual to be regarded as the unit? Should a woman be regarded primarily as a human being or as an actual or potential mother?

\* "Sex," Thomson and Geddes, p. 237.

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In practice, the reply often seems to be that the man is the unit and the woman and children his appendages. It is interesting to notice that, on the whole, the same people who feel most strongly that the woman's sphere is the home, and that she has no separate and individual existence apart from it, also declare that "male leadership in the home needs emphasis." It may fairly be said that the general tendency is to think of a man as being primarily a human being, with full human rights, and as being the normal type of the complete human being, and of a woman as being "primarily a mother," as having a "peculiar contribution" to make in various directions; to say that her essential "difference" from man, as the normal and typical human being, must be constantly remembered. If this conception of the function of womanhood is true, even in a less exaggerated form, it is difficult to know what to say to the women who are to-day claiming "the right to motherhood." There is no doubt that a large number of women are suffering acutely from the fact that they are brought up in the belief that there is no true life for a woman apart from a man, and that she can only find satisfaction in marriage and motherhood. In different ways, there is a tendency to exaggerate and over-emphasize the place of sex functions in the lives of both men and women, with disastrous results to both. At the



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same time, by some curious inner contradiction, unmarried women have been taught to suppress and ignore the very existence of such instincts. No wonder that some are in considerable confusion of mind, now that these questions are being publicly and frequently discussed.

The recognition of the equal humanity of both man and woman, and of the complementary nature of their work in the world, together with their common responsibility and privilege in regard to parenthood, the recognition of the right of the child to both father and mother, the building up of homes in which each human soul is free, and is revered, and in which each is the servant of all—is the ideal for which men and women and the Christian Church are alike called to strive: it is not an impossible one, for it has often been achieved.

This brings us to the profoundest question of all: “What is Christian marriage?”

There is, probably, no question agitating the modern mind which so urgently needs an answer as this—but it is not to be confused with the question of divorce. There is no wonder that it is frequently so confused, for the negative command, “Thou shalt not be divorced,” sounds much more plainly in our ears than does any positive teaching about marriage.

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The question of divorce is here deliberately passed over, partly because of its extreme difficulty, but also because the development of normal human life to its highest possible level, is a more urgent matter still. The lack of positive teaching about marriage, and of a compelling moral ideal, has produced a condition of dim-eyed confusion, which is both depressing and dangerous.

Society has always insisted on marriage laws, and dealt severely with the law-breakers, and will probably continue to do so. It is the task of the Church not only to help her children to resist temptation and eschew wrong-doing, but to hold up before them that great positive ideal of marriage and parenthood in which alone they will find the fulfilment of their deepest and dearest desires.

There is no real revolt against marriage among healthy and normal women ; there is a very great deal of revolt against many of the conditions which are commonly associated with it. This is one of those questions, the future settlement of which lies very largely in the hands of women, and to the solution of which the Woman's Movement has already contributed a very great deal. Reform will come about to a great extent indirectly through improved relations between men and women in many different directions. In their strivings after these things the women claim, and are more and more receiving, the

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sympathetic understanding and co-operation of the leaders of the Church.

There has never been any real doubt as to what the Christian Church had to say about marriage. This remains true, even though she says it in a distressingly negative form sometimes, and even though moral abuses may have been associated with her history from time to time, and even though the Church or the officials of the Church may have been guilty of compromise and subterfuge. A kindly critic has said of the Catholic Church that she has always stood for an ideal so high, and so rigid, that in her very efforts to attain the unattainable, she has sometimes seemed to fall below the common level.

If we turn to the Gospel, we shall not find much which bears directly upon marriage, but what is there is extraordinarily significant. The directness of the Church's teaching on this question is probably due to the extreme directness and definiteness of some of our Lord's own sayings. In regard to our Lord's teaching as a whole, it has been recognized that He laid down principles to be worked out, and ideals to be followed, rather than clear-cut enactments to be obeyed. Christian people have, perhaps, been tempted, in regard to His teaching about marriage, to lay hold of His more than usually clear-cut directions, and to

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turn them into legal enactments—to the neglect of the great fundamental principles upon which He Himself based them. It is evident that in the thought of Christ, the family is fundamental; He speaks of the ideal of the life-long union of one man and one woman, as “from the beginning,” and the Mosaic law as being a concession to men’s hardness of heart. The natural relationship is, in its essence and ideal, a relationship which cannot be dissolved. Christ did not come to teach men a new kind of life in a new kind of world, but to restore them to that full and complete humanity which was the plan of God for them when He created them in His own Image.

Further study of Christ’s teaching about marriage shows that it is closely related to His teaching about children, and the more one thinks of the manifold problems which are raised in connection with the marriage relationship, the more clear it becomes that they must be settled, primarily, in relation not to the individual man or woman, or to his or her supposed happiness, but in relation to the child, that is to say, in relation to the race and to the future.

During the sad days of this year of war we have learnt again the meaning of sacrifice; and we have proved again that men and women

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are prepared to sacrifice all that they possess if the call to sacrifice is clear and compelling.

The claim of the race is greater than any personal happiness ; we have learnt in a hundred ways to set aside private ends for the public good ; we have learnt to live for a cause.

Men and women have seen a little further into one another's hearts, and while we have much to confess of folly and weakness, we have learnt to reverence one another in a new way. Our work in the world is in great measure a different work, though there is much we share in common ; we have learnt that we are indispensable the one to the other.

Let us see to it that the children of to-morrow enter into an inheritance purified by the suffering of to-day ; a new world in which the spirit of hate and lust and greed shall have been driven out by the Spirit of Reverence and Love.

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## APPENDIX I.

### THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND THE ENGLISH FREE CHURCHES.

*These statements have been prepared by responsible members of each of the denominations concerned.*

#### THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

*(The complicated nature of the subject and the short time which could be allowed for collecting the information, may be responsible for some incompleteness, or possibly for some inaccuracy in detail, but according to the information received, the following is believed to be correct.)*

It is difficult to give any account of the position of women in the Church of England which shall be clear, concise, and accurate. Though in modern times the large majority of lay-workers have been women, and although it is probable that the work of the Church in nearly every parish could hardly be carried on without their co-operation, nor the work of the Church abroad be maintained without

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their efforts, yet their position as Church workers has, till quite recently, been wholly undefined, and, to a very great extent, this is still the case.

Women have shown a disposition to undertake any work for which they saw the need, and, in most cases, to work without remuneration. So far from raising the estimation of their work, this has tended to depreciate it, and this again has reacted unfavourably upon the quality of their work. They have very commonly failed to recognize the necessity of fitting themselves by careful training to carry on thoroughly and efficiently any work they undertake. This is probably due far less to any lack of earnestness on their part, than to what they cannot fail to recognize, viz. that a far lower standard is accepted for the voluntary help which they offer than would be required for paid work, and that the kind of Church worker who is most in demand is the woman who will do a little of many things, even if she can do no one thing well. When a salary is given, it is in most cases so inadequate, that if a woman has no private means it would be difficult for her, with such unremunerative work in view, to obtain any previous training.

During the last few years, efforts have been made to improve the status of the paid Church worker, by insisting on the need of (*a*) suitable training, and (*b*) more suitable remuneration.

Though long acquiescence in a lower standard has created prejudices which are not easily overcome, the efforts that have been made to raise the



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standard of women's work in many directions are full of promise. The improvement owes much to the encouragement which such efforts have constantly met with from the Archbishop of Canterbury, as well as from many other Bishops. It is noticeable that on more than one occasion, when the recognition of women's work has been under discussion, it has received far more general support from the Bishops than from the priests and from the laymen.

There are now bodies of Churchwomen who have received special training for their work, some of whom have also received definite episcopal appointment.

DEACONESSSES.—The revival of the Order dates from about 1862. Candidates for the diaconate are usually trained for about two years. They are often licensed for a time as lay workers to do parochial work before receiving ordination at the hands of the Bishop. Licensed lay workers do not, however, necessarily become deaconesses. After ordination, deaconesses are chiefly employed in various departments of parochial work under the direction of the incumbent of the parish to which they are licensed by the Bishop of the diocese. In this respect they are on much the same footing as curates. Without the Bishop's permission they can neither undertake work in a diocese nor resign it. There are several Deaconess Institutions, some of which exist primarily to train candidates for the diaconate or for other

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Church work. In others, a Community life is maintained, the deaconesses being, at the same time, "professed" as Sisters. Though still under episcopal authority, these deaconesses owe obedience to the Heads of their Community. Deaconesses who are not Sisters take no vows, but when pledging themselves to the work of a deaconess, it is understood that they thereby renounce marriage.

MILDMAY DEACONESSSES are connected with the Institution founded in 1860 to train women for parochial work. Their course of training lasts at least two years. They do not receive episcopal ordination, but are admitted at a dedication service held by their chaplain, when they make a promise of readiness for any service, and of loyalty to their Community. They take no other vows, but the work is regarded as permanent. They are chiefly engaged in parochial work in London, such work being undertaken only at the invitation of the incumbent. They also maintain two hospitals and other institutions. Hitherto, they have lived in Community. The name "Mildmay" Deaconesses distinguishes them from ordained, diocesan deaconesses.

GREY LADIES, *i.e.*, "The College of Women Workers for the Church of God in South London." After a period of probation and training, women are admitted to the College by the Bishop of the diocese, and, as long as they remain members of it,

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they are under the authority of the Bishop, the officers of the College, and the incumbents in whose parishes their work lies. Their house is at Blackheath.

**LICENSED TEACHERS OF THEOLOGY.**—For some time, Church teaching, given outside the services held in church, has been largely or chiefly given by women, who, however, in most cases, had received no previous training for this most responsible work, nor was any standard of competence generally recognized. The Archbishop of Canterbury, therefore, in 1905, instituted his Licence to teach Theology, which he confers at an annual service held in Lambeth Palace Chapel, upon women who desire to make Church teaching their special work, and of whose personal and spiritual fitness the Archbishop has satisfactory evidence. None are eligible for the Licence except those who have received careful theological training, and who, having then passed the Archbishop's examination, have obtained his Diploma in Theology. Some are now teaching in schools and colleges at home and abroad, or lecture and give private instruction to students. Some are engaged in evangelistic work in England and India.

**MISSION WOMEN.**—Women of the industrial classes have opportunities for serving the Church as Mission women. The Church Army Mission

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women receive a short training, after which they are employed in parishes for visiting, holding women's meetings, etc., under the direction of the incumbent.

COMMUNITIES.—The revival of Sisterhoods took place between 1841 and 1848. There is now a very large number of Communities, the members of which live according to the rule of their particular Community, which they recognize as their authority in the whole ordering of their life. They take the vows which pledge them to celibacy, to the holding of their possessions in common, and to obedience to their Community. Their "profession" as Sisters is made to a Bishop in some Communities, but others do not regard this as essential. Their relation to the Bishop varies in other respects. In some Sisterhoods the Bishop is the Visitor, and exercises much closer control over the affairs of the Community than in other Sisterhoods. Sisters do not make a life of active service their chief object, but a life of prayer, and some Orders give themselves wholly to prayer and contemplation; others carry on such work as is consistent with the rule of their Community.

PAROCHIAL WORK.—Women may baptize in case of emergency. They cannot officiate in any other capacity in administering the rites of the Church, nor take part in leading in public worship, unless it be as organists, choristers, etc. But they are eligible for other administrative functions, *e.g.* as PATRONS, *i.e.*, they may hold the gift of benefices,

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and bestow them according to their discretion. They may also act as CHURCHWARDENS, and thus control the finances of the parish.

They frequently act as Sacristans. In most parishes, the teaching of Bible Classes and Sunday Schools is mainly in their hands. In a few dioceses women have been appointed to go from place to place to visit the Sunday Schools, and give such advice and help as may be required.

It would be impossible to enumerate the branches of work of the most various kinds carried on by women in connection with parochial organizations and many societies nor would such information be relevant in a statement which is concerned with the *position* of women in the Church rather than with their *work*.

At the present time, Churchwomen of the industrial classes are unrepresented on the Boards even of those societies and organizations whose work specially concerns them. It would be well that consideration should be directed to the advisability of securing their co-operation, and giving them a share of responsibility.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.—The general tendency to improvement in the status of the woman Church worker, is shown in the greater care now taken in the preparation of those who are about to take up foreign mission work. A large number of women are working abroad, in connection with the

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Missionary Societies of the Church, but of the chief Missionary Societies, two exclude women altogether from their Executive Councils; another has Consultative Committees of women to deliberate upon the work for women carried on by their Society, but their recommendations can only be carried out if approved by the Standing Committee which is composed wholly of men. Another Society is in a state of transition with regard to this matter; women do not at present sit on the General Committee, which is the ultimate authority, but there is a disposition to give them increased responsibility. The Church of England Zenana Missionary Society gives women full executive functions.

In 1914, the Constitution of the Central Board of Missions was altered so as to make women eligible to be co-opted to serve on the Board, but not to be elected as diocesan representatives. The proviso was made that not more than twenty women should be thus co-opted, the total number of the Board being about three hundred.

On the recently constituted CENTRAL BOARD OF CHURCH FINANCE, no women have seats.

As regards CHURCH COUNCILS, in *theory* the Constitution was settled by the Representative Church Council. As amended by the Council in July, 1914, the following appears to be the scheme for the representation of the laity on Church assemblies, viz. on (a) Parochial Church Councils, (b) Ruri-decanal Conferences, (c) Diocesan Conferences, (d) the Provincial Houses of Laymen.



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the members of which also constitute the Lay House of the Representative Church Council. The Parochial Church Council is elected by the qualified electors in a parish, *i.e.*, by men and women above twenty-one years of age who are communicants of the Church of England, or who have been baptized and confirmed and are admissible to Holy Communion, and do not belong to any religious body not in communion with the Church of England. Women may also be elected as representatives to sit on the Parochial Church Council. The lay members of the Ruri-decanal Conference are elected by the qualified parochial electors. Women may, therefore, elect, but they may not be elected as representatives. The lay members of the Diocesan Conference are elected by the lay representatives of the Ruri-decanal Conferences, or, if the Diocesan Conference so determine, they may be elected by the qualified parochial electors. Women, therefore, may or may not elect for the Diocesan Conference; but they are not eligible to sit on it. The House of Laymen is elected by the lay members of the Diocesan Conferences. Women are not eligible to sit in the House of Laymen, nor may they elect.

In *practice*, however, the above scheme has not received general assent, the exclusion of women from the Ruri-decanal and Diocesan Conference being in opposition to the decisions made on the subject in some dioceses. There is no uniform plan. Each diocese has, apparently, the right to settle the constitution of its Conferences, and the manner of their election. Thus, in some dioceses,



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women are eligible to sit on the Ruri-decanal and Diocesan Conference, and in at least one diocese, they do actually sit on the Diocesan Conference. At the meeting of the Canterbury House of Laymen, in July, 1915, a protest was made by the Bishop of Worcester, as chairman of the Worcester Diocesan Conference, challenging the right of the Representative Church Council to exclude women without referring the matter to the lay members of the Diocesan Conferences; and a committee was appointed to consider the constitutional questions raised. At the meeting of the Representative Church Council, in July, 1915, the Archbishop of Canterbury stated that he had received a petition bearing over 4,000 signatures, asking that the rules of the Council be amended so as to render women eligible for all offices in the Councils of the Church now open to male communicants. This then is the stage which the question has reached at the present time.

The committees which made the arrangements for the Pan-Anglican Congress of 1908 were composed of men and women. The recognition by the women of the usefulness of such opportunities for meeting to discuss their various branches of work, led to the formation of the Central Committee of Women's Church Work, which meets annually for the purpose of deliberation only; it has no Executive functions.

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### THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES.

*(The following notes refer to the Presbyterian Church, strictly so called; Welsh Calvinistic Methodists are, in polity, partly Methodist and partly Presbyterian.)*

1. Men and women, communicant members of any Presbyterian church, have complete equality, so far as voting rights go. In all matters of congregational government and the election of elders and deacons, all members in full communion have equal rights of voting.

2. Presbyterianism is only partly a democratic system; it is, strictly speaking, a government by a representative oligarchy—an oligarchy of presbyters. Presbyters are of two sorts, *i.e.*, teaching elders (ministers), and ruling elders, commonly called simply “elders.” Although all members vote for the election of ruling elders, only men are eligible for the post, and, similarly, only men are eligible for the post of teaching elder or minister. The Church Courts, which are, in order of authority, the Synod (governing the whole church), the Presbytery (governing a district), and the Session (governing an individual congregation), are entirely composed of presbyters, and are, therefore, closed to women, although, ultimately, all are elected, or called, by the vote of church members, that is of men and women.

3. In addition to the order of Presbyters, there is the position of deacon or manager, whose

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functions are equivalent—although the deacon is ordained, while the manager is not. (The United Free Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church of England have both offices in different congregations, and the difference goes back to the old Free Church of Scotland, which had deacons, and the United Presbyterian Church which had managers. At the fusion of these two Churches in the United Free Church, in 1900, the two types persisted, and congregations in the E.P. Church, which had affinity with one or other branch of the United Free Church, also perpetuated the difference in practice; it is not important.) Women are eligible for election as managers, and, in quite a number of congregations, hold the office. There is some difference of opinion whether it is ecclesiastically legal for women to be deacons; one has recently been elected and ordained in a London Presbyterian church; the matter was recently discussed at the Presbytery, but no clear decision was come to. In Scotland, the Assembly of the United Free Church has been asked to declare, there being the same ambiguity as in England, that women are eligible for the diaconate. It should be noted that the entry of women into the managership and diaconate is not really, in the Presbyterian system, a great advance, as the essential people are the Presbyters, and no Presbyterian church has yet to my knowledge allowed women to become Presbyters.

4. Church committees. There is a strong movement on foot in the Presbyterian churches, to include some women in the committees of Synod on

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the affairs of the Church, *e.g.*, foreign missions, the instruction of youth, etc., etc. These are carried on by synodical committees which are normally composed of ministers and elders who are members of Synod, or, in case of elders, if not members of Synod, members of a Presbytery. This fact that synodical committees are composed of presbyters, so far has been a bar to the election of women to them, but it is certain, in my opinion, that this bar will be overcome, either by the election of women as presbyters, or, more probably, by the admission of women to the committees as co-opted members.

5. It is along the practical lines of getting women into co-operation on committees of Synod that progress in the future will be most fruitful. Presbyterianism has a very highly-developed Church polity, with a strongly conservative tendency, but it is also very practical and responsive to practical considerations. If women prove their worth on church committees, and the ordinary elder is convinced of their worth, their admission to the presbyterate cannot be long deferred.

6. As a convinced and enthusiastic Presbyterian, I may be permitted to say that the office of the eldership seems, to my mind, to present an ideal sphere in which women may exercise spiritual office; it is a genuinely spiritual office, the principle of "the parity of presbyters," *i.e.*, the equality of ministers and elders, is the foundation principle of Presbyterian government. At the same time, it can be, and is, carried on by people otherwise occupied, business men, etc., and could, therefore,

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be fully discharged by women with families or other ties. There is no great demand, to my knowledge, that women should become ministers, but the eldership does present an opportunity such as no other form of church government does, for including women in the spiritual leadership of the Church, without putting a premium on unmarried women and widows !

7. Lastly, the fact that only men can hold the office of the eldership is, in my opinion, reflected in the general status of women in Presbyterianism. On the whole, Presbyterianism believes that "woman's place is the home." It would take too long to enter into the causes of this. Owing, perhaps, to the fact that most Presbyterian churches have had a great belief in education, they are not badly provided with women of training and ability, and, if they only will, can make great use of their women. There is still far too much of the tendency to regard women's ecclesiastical functions as being fitly confined to the decoration of churches, the sewing of garments, and the collection of money.

### *THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE METHODIST CHURCHES.*

PRIMITIVE METHODISTS.—Women are allowed to preach, provided they pass the examination set for local preachers in the circuits : a pretty stiff one at present. They can occupy the same

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position as men in every respect. They attend the Quarterly Meeting—the chief meeting of the circuit, which is the unit of Church government, the circuit being a union of two or more local Churches; and they may be elected as delegates by the Quarterly Meeting to the Synod or District Meeting (corresponding, roughly, to the Anglican diocese), and by the Synod to the Conference, or supreme assembly of the Church. There is hardly any position in the Church now to which women may not be elected. Women are eligible to the post of President of the Conference, though there has never been a case of this.

UNITED METHODISTS.—The Constitution has no rule or regulation barring women's activity in any part of Church life, or Church courts. Women are eligible for admission to all the Church councils. Many are members of "leaders' meetings" (the administrative body in the local church); quite a large number attend the Synods of the Districts (annual meetings) as delegates, and, for some years past, there have been at least half a dozen women representatives at Conference. Women can be trustees of Church property; and they can preach, not only as "sisters" or deaconesses, but as local preachers. Women are, of course, and have been from time immemorial, as in all the Methodist Churches, class-leaders. (The "classes" are small companies into which the whole membership of every local church is divided; each band has a "leader," who is responsible, under the minister,



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for the spiritual well being, and for some of the financial contributions, of the "class" to which he or she is appointed.)

WESLEYAN METHODISTS.—Women may be, and constantly are, class-leaders, and, as such, are members of the leaders' meetings; these leaders' meetings are now enlarged by the election of representatives from the church membership; and women may be elected as well as men, and regularly are. There is a regular order of Deaconesses in the Church, trained and set apart; but they have no official privileges as such, although the minister of the church which engages them may appoint them to take meetings as he pleases (but see below).

As regards preaching, this is regarded as exceptional. Women with special gifts for preaching may preach in the circuit where they live, if they "have obtained the approbation of the Superintendent Minister and the Quarterly Meeting of the Circuit. In the case of Wesley Deaconesses, the permission of the Warden and Committee of the Deaconess Institute is equivalent to and shall take the place of that of the Superintendent and Quarterly Meeting." Before preaching in any other circuit, they must have a written invitation from the Superintendent of that circuit and a recommendatory note from the Superintendent of their own circuit. A woman cannot thus be a regular lay or local preacher. It should be noted that lay preachers have to pass an examination in theological knowledge



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and a test as to their gifts, in their circuit ; but when they have once passed this, they can claim to be allowed to preach in any circuit in which they may subsequently reside.

Each circuit is allowed to send one or more lay representatives to the Synod, women equally with men, although few women actually are elected at present. Women can also be elected to Conference by the Synod on exactly the same terms as men. Some fifteen to twenty women are generally so elected each year. The Conference itself appoints a certain number of lay representatives, each year for three years, and it can elect women as well as men ; and does so, rarely. It must be remembered that with all questions of ministerial discipline, lay men and women have nothing to do. Women can, however, serve on all Connexional Committees. All other offices, including the stewardship of local church funds and finances, the care of church plant, and the trusteeship of church property, appear to be open to women as well as to men. As a matter of fact, women are found in these offices, generally in the small country churches : that they do not often appear as officers, elsewhere, is due, partly to lack of imagination in men and women alike, and partly to the fact that, in many cases, the men have more experience and business ability, and the women would be themselves unwilling to undertake these responsibilities.

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### THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

IN the Congregational Churches there is theoretically no difference at all between the position of men and women. Women are full members of the Church and have the same right as men of speaking and voting in the Church meeting. There is no constitutional reason against women being elected to executive office as deacons, and in one or two cases there have been women ministers.

But in practice, although women do their full share of Church *work*, such as visitation, Sunday School teaching, missionary organization and speaking, they do not take so great a share of *responsibility* as is in theory theirs. It is only a small proportion of women who take part in Church meetings. This is partly because women have been slow to express themselves and consequently neither they nor the men have realized how valuable their contributions to discussion and devotion might be; and partly because in purely business matters, men have as a rule more experience.

A more healthy tradition is, however, growing up. Women are very often placed on important special Committees of a Church (*e.g.*, for the appointment of a Minister); and though the number of women deacons is not yet large, a growing minority of Churches is discovering the value of women on the diaconate or as Church

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Secretaries or Treasurers. From some Churches women are regularly elected as representatives to the County Congregational Unions, and to the Congregational Union of England and Wales, which also has several women members on its Council.

### *THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE BAPTIST CHURCH.*

THEORETICALLY, the position of women in the Baptist Church is the same as that of men ; there are no disabilities on the ground of sex. They become Church members on the same terms as men, and have the same voting powers. They may, and do, become deacons, church secretaries, and ministers, though in the case of the last-named position, very few have actually occupied it in this country. Numbers of women are recognized "local preachers." Women are eligible as delegates to the General Assembly, are represented on the more important committees of the Baptist Union and the Baptist Missionary Society, and take a leading part in organizing and in platform work. In actual practice, women have not taken as large a share in Baptist Church life as they are theoretically entitled to, partly because of their own hesitancy, and partly, too, because of prejudice, on the part of both men and women, against their taking a prominent part.

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### THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

EXTRACT FROM TRACT BY GEORGE FOX 1656.—  
*So be ashamed for ever, and let all your mouths be  
stopped for ever, that despise the spirit of prophecy in  
the daughters, and do cast them into prison, and do  
hinder the women labourers in the gospel ; and saith  
the apostle, Christ in the male and in the female ;  
and if Christ be in the female as well as in the male,  
is not He the same ? And may not the Spirit of  
Christ speak in the female as well as in the male ?  
Is He there to be limited ? Who is it that dare limit  
the Holy One of Israel ! For the light is the same in  
the male, and in the female, which cometh from  
Christ. . . .*

THE Society of Friends is organized on an entirely democratic basis. Its ideal is often expressed as an organization without any laity, where all members have an equal right and responsibility. For the right holding of its meetings for worship, those who take part in the vocal ministry are "acknowledged as ministers," and for the general care of the members, elders and overseers are appointed. These appointments are made by the Monthly Meeting, which is composed of local groups of four or five meetings. These report to the Quarterly Meeting. The Quarterly Meeting areas, which cover the whole of the country, comprise the Yearly Meeting, which has met annually since 1672. "The Meeting for

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Sufferings," to which representatives are appointed from each Quarterly Meeting, meets each month in London, and is the executive gathering for carrying on the general work of the Society throughout the year. A Women's Yearly Meeting was established in 1784. From that time, down to a generation ago (about 1880), men's and women's meetings were held simultaneously, presided over respectively by a clerk and assistant, who summed up the general sense of the meeting, and recorded it in minutes. The women's meetings were chiefly occupied with the care of the poor, and the visitation of women Friends on their removal to or from other meetings, admission to membership, or "in dealing with cases of delinquency." They were in frequent consultation with the Men's Meeting, often making joint appointments of men and women Friends. When questions of general interest to men and women came before the meeting, it became the custom to hold a joint meeting. This was also the case where meetings were very small. During the last twenty-five or thirty years, separate women's meetings in the Monthly and Quarterly Meeting areas have been gradually given up, and men and women have met on entirely equal terms for the general transaction of business.

Similarly, in the Yearly Meeting, "joint sittings" in which women were equally free with men to take their full share in discussion, became more frequent, and, in 1907, the women's Yearly Meeting ceased to exist, since which date, women Friends have formed an integral part of the Yearly

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Meeting. In all these church meetings, there is entire freedom for men and women to take an equal share in the service of the meeting. All regulations for the conduct of the business of the Society apply equally to men and women.

The same liberty is recognized in the ministry. Advice and counsel for the right exercise of this, applies equally to men and women.

The regulations for marriage apply equally to men and women. Without the intervention of any minister, the man and woman taking each other in marriage at a meeting for worship, repeat similar words, saying : " Friends, I take this my friend A. B. to be my wife (husband), promising, through Divine assistance, to be unto her (him) a loving and faithful husband (wife) until it shall please the Lord by death to separate us."

Comparatively little will be found in the literature of Friends relating to the position of women. It has been taken as the accepted fact and natural position, that men and women should together transact the affairs of the church, with equal rights and responsibilities.

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### *THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN THE SALVATION ARMY.*

To every official position of The Salvation Army women are as freely admitted as men. In so splendid a helper as his wife, Catherine Booth, the Founder of the Movement recognized at a period when woman's public ministry was looked upon with misgiving, the truth of the statement that "in Christ there is neither male or female." And in the face of much opposition he raised the women of The Salvation Army to the same platform as the men, and his decision has been amply justified. Of the 16,500 Officers in The Army, at least fifty per cent. are women.

In framing the Regulations for The Salvation Army, William Booth set forth that:—

"One of the leading principles upon which The Salvation Army is based, is the right of woman to an equal share with man in the great work of publishing Salvation to the world. By an unalterable provision in The Army's 'Foundation Deeds,' she can hold any position of authority or power in The Army, from that of a Local Officer to that of General."

Fully to understand the significance of this rule, a brief outline of the formation and government of The Salvation Army is necessary.



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Salvationists include : Soldiers, Local (or non-commissioned) Officers, Field, Social and Staff Officers. Local Officers bear specific responsibility in the management of the Corps—or Evangelistic work of the Organization. Field Officers have charge of the Corps, Social Officers of Social Institutions and Agencies, including the Slum Work. Staff Officers have charge of the work in countries, in divisions of countries, and the various administrative departments connected with the Headquarters.

By the foregoing it will be seen that women of all ranks are entitled to the same honours, are armed with the same authority, and are responsible for the full discharge of similar duties as men.

The wife of the present Leader, Mrs. Bramwell Booth, is actively associated with her husband in the direction of the world-wide work of The Army, and takes a prominent place in all important conferences and councils, and herself conducts public campaigns in the United Kingdom and abroad. At the present time, four of the Territorial Commanders are women. They are responsible to the General for the entire work, including complex business responsibilities of The Army, in the Territories they represent, which, in some cases, include all the operations in a country—such, for instance, as the United States of America, where Miss Evangeline Booth, daughter of the Founder, is in charge.

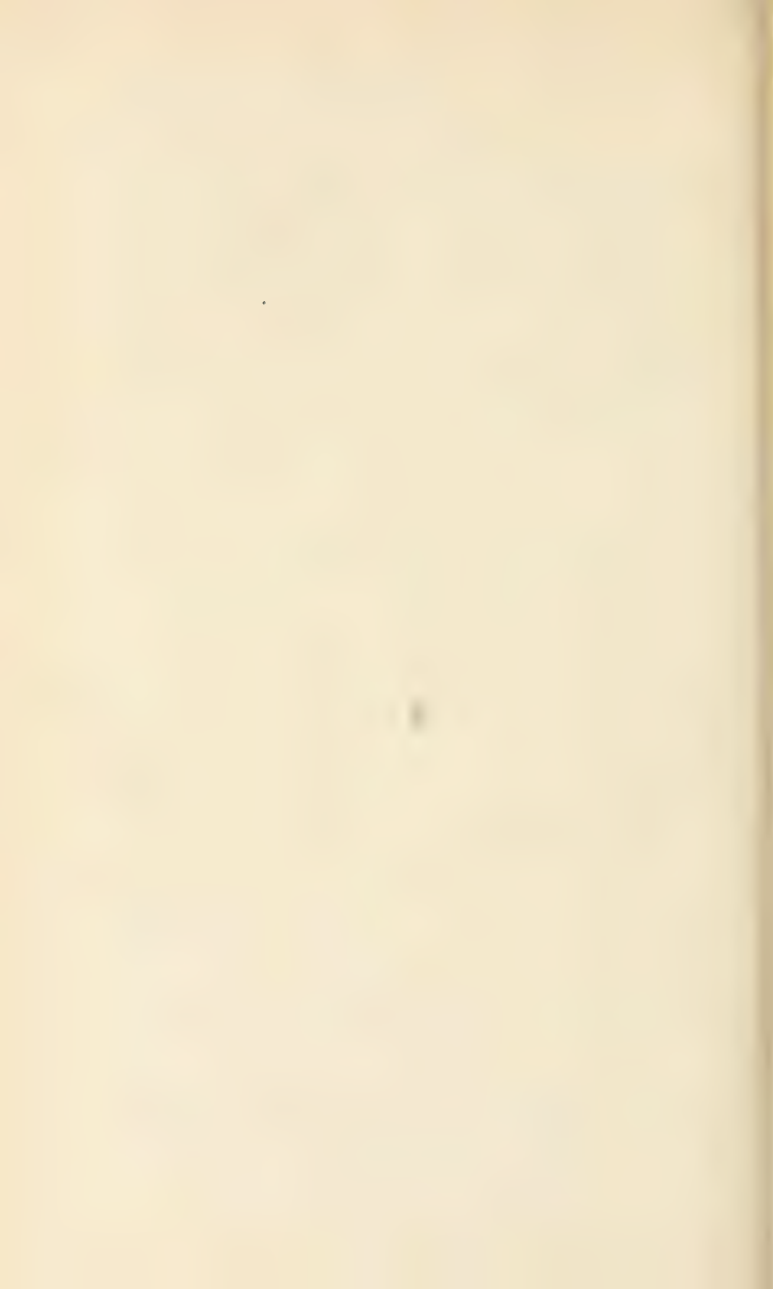
Women also occupy prominent executive positions in the Social, Field, Training, Literary,

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and Financial Departments of The Salvation Army.

A woman Officer retains her Commission as such subsequent to marriage to an Officer, and usually takes an active part in the official duties for which her husband is responsible.

In some circumstances, a woman Officer, after marriage, may hold separate responsibilities from those of her husband.



## APPENDIX II.

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# the Woman's Movement.

## APPENDIX III.

### SOME SOCIETIES OF WOMEN WORKERS, ETC.

Christian Social Union, 26 Norfolk Square, W.

Fabian Women's Group, 25 Tothill Street, Westminster.

National Union of Women Workers, Parliament Mansions,  
Victoria Street, S.W.

National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, 14 Great Smith  
Street, Westminster.

National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage, 515 Caxton  
House, Westminster.

National Anti-Sweating League, 34 Mecklenburgh Square, W.C.

Women's Labour League, 3 Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.

Women's Co-operative Guild, 26 Church Row, Hampstead, N.W.

Women's Industrial Council, 7 John Street, Adelphi.

Women's Trade Union League and National Federation of  
Woman Workers, 34 Mecklenburgh Square, W.C.













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